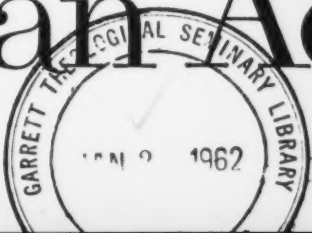


# Christian Advocate



DECEMBER 21, 1961

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"ARISE, SHINE: FOR YOUR  
LIGHT HAS COME..."

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GARRETT BIBLICAL INST R 40  
EVANSTON ILL

# These NEWS Times

*Some signs of the times since our last issue are reported here. For additional news and trends, continue to page 21.*

**More evidence** that religion is becoming confused by some with patriotism is evidenced by a recent statement by the president of a Lutheran seminary, Dr. Karl E. Mattson. The educator declared at a recent church vocations conference that "Christianity is not a political faith. It has been placed in a position where it was never meant to be. The church has become a club among other clubs; religion has become a social force among other social forces. Whether it is used as a bulwark against Communism or social injustice, it was never intended to be such." Too often, what is best in America is often identified with the kingdom of God, Dr. Mattson said.

**West Indies** Negro immigrants are made to feel unwanted in churches of industrial centers where they have settled in Britain, a West Indian Negro pastor asserted in an article in a publication of the British Baptists. Following a six months' survey of problems facing West Indians in Britain, the Rev. M. E. W. Sawyers announced that few of the West Indian immigrants have any connection with the churches. He was frequently told that West Indians were made to feel they were not wanted by the churches. Also, West Indians express the opinion that worship services were often "cold." Immigrants were perplexed that so few Britons went to church, and said they were ridiculed at work for attending services.

**Churches should** do a better job of preparing their young men for the military draft, believes Dr. Engebret O. Midboe, head of the Lutheran Council's Bureau of Service to Military Personnel. There is need for "some down-to-earth counseling on what this struggle is all about. While the church cannot identify itself with any form of human government, the church must teach her people what the Christian faith has to say about the current atheistic communistic aggression."

**Protestant missions** and service abroad should be "divorced completely

from sectarian creed" as a major step toward church union. So believes the new president of the United Church of Christ's Board for World Ministries. Protestant union in world missions would bring unity much nearer to achievement, asserts Dr. William C. Nelson. Whether actual union or through extending the limits of co-operation, Dr. Nelson believes in the principle, doctrine divides—service unites.

**Just how outspoken** should a staff member of an organization be on public issues, especially when there is some likelihood that his position would differ from that of an appreciable number of the membership of that organization? The Louisville, Ky., Area Council of Churches' executive board settled that problem recently by adopting a new constitution which limits the position on public issues that can be taken by its officers and employees. The new constitution was prompted by the controversy which broke out over the right-wing views of Dr. N. Burnett Magruder, the Council's executive director. In part the constitution says, "As free men, we have the right to express our opinions on any ideas that deal with the moral, economic, political, and social issues of our time, but when a person becomes identified with this organization as a leader, he must not use his office to promote his position on controversial matters without the consent of the Council. If he disagrees with a neutral position, he must make it clear he is speaking as an individual and not as a representative of the Council. If the Council takes a position on the issue, any paid employee must not disagree publicly with the position of the council."

**Airlines have** been unable to agree thus far on a plan to abandon the serving of liquor to airline coach passengers. Some of the carriers had recently advanced a plan whereby meals and liquor service would be discontinued to coach passengers as an economy move. Such service would be continued, according to the plan, to holders of first class tickets. However, since there could not be agreement among all the carriers, notably some of the smaller lines, service is continuing. Meanwhile, a plan has gone into effect which prohibits airlines from receiving as passengers those under the influence of an intoxicant. Airlines, through their operating personnel, are made responsible for enforcement of the new regulation.

**A Reformed Jewish** congregation in Miami, Florida, will include a 250-family fallout shelter in its new synagogue building. Memberships in the shelter will be sold on a non-sectarian basis, with most memberships to persons not temple members. A synagogue leader pointed out that a majority of the temple mem-

bership lives too far away to take advantage of the shelter in case of emergency. Tentative membership costs range from \$1,300 for a couple to \$1,900 for couple with three children, with \$150 for each additional child. Meanwhile, fallout shelters are now being constructed at the North Carolina Baptist Assembly grounds near Southport, N.C. The shelters will be used for the Southport metropolitan area and will be maintained by Civil Defense personnel.

**Another voice** has been raised during these times against capital punishment. The Georgia Council of Churches recently adopted a resolution saying it is "unalterably opposed" to the death penalty, especially for juveniles, and calling on the state's General Assembly to abolish capital punishment. A proposed amendment to the resolution limiting it only to juveniles was defeated by the council.

**Replying to** a November 16 statement by Roman Catholic bishops which again asserted the claim of Roman Catholicism to a share of public funds for parochial schools, Dean Kelley, National Council of Church staff member, declared, "We cannot afford in this nation to divide the already inadequate resources of public education among a series of competitive private school systems. Furthermore, it is contrary to American law and tradition to give tax funds to churches to build up their real estate."

**Taking his text** from Colossians 1: 15-20, Chicago Professor Joseph Sittler told World Council of Churches delegates that the Church needs a Christology of all nature, not just of history or of the moral soul. *Time* called the speech "perhaps the most original and challenging address" given at New Delhi. "Ever since Hiroshima the very term light has ghastly meanings," Sittler said. "But ever since creation it has had meanings glorious; and ever since Bethlehem, meanings concrete and beckoning." (For more on the Assembly, see pages 22-24).

## the cover

*The light of the world has indeed come, as was anticipated by the words of 2 Isaiah (60:1). This issue we discuss the coming of the Christ child through music, preaching, and an examination of the way men relate to one another in a world which still hasn't opened itself fully to God's Gift. Our lead story on page 5 describes a new kind of pacifism. The Christmas music of John and Charles Wesley, and the mighty Handel oratorio, The Messiah, are discussed on pages 7 and 9. The preaching of God's Word receives attention on pages 11 and 12.*

*The young acolyte on our cover is Bill Smoltz, of the Arlington Heights (Ill.) Methodist Church.—ADVOCATE PHOTO.*

# COMMENT

## Peace, a Gift From God

PEACE IS CERTAINLY more than cessation or absence of hostilities. The world's people have learned this bitter lesson since World War II. And yet, the people of the world want peace, a world void of any appreciable amount of international suspicion and tension, uncertainty about survival, and based on human freedom, mutual respect, trust and faith.

True, certain conflicts of interests become major sources of tensions. Threats, counterthreats, military buildups, counterbuildups, threatening military moves, countermoves, economic blockades, counter blockades, and so the vicious circle continues. All this coupled with the demise of colonialism as millions of people throw off shackles of domination and exploitation, and you have a world of mounting tension, nagging uncertainty, and doubts about ultimate survival. This is the kind of world which religious leaders face at Christmas, 1961, the birthday of Him who is called the Prince of Peace.

The Christian believes that with God's help man must use every legitimate means to improve man's relationship to man, people to people, and nation with nation, but he also knows that even after he has done everything he can, the rest is in the hands of God. Peace is a gift of God, given in God's own time, but certainly not before man has qualified himself to receive it. Man's continuing obligation is to prepare himself, his fellow man, to receive this precious gift.

In all our strivings for a better world, we tend to overlook the prerequisite, preparation of self, for receiving God's gift. We picket, demonstrate, sign statements, send wires, write letters, organize study groups, distribute peace materials, all creative efforts which have their place. However, we should not forget the preparations of ourselves and those for whom as pastors we are responsible to receive this wondrous gift of peace. God is only too willing to give when we are ready to receive.

This Christmas, 1961, should move each of us to greater devotion to Him who is God's supreme manifestation that peace is possible in every man's experience, even in a world made complex by conflicts of interests, revolutionaries striving for self-determination, militarists made overanxious by new weapons. But that peace is a gift, conferred on a world made ready to receive it. Our mission is to prepare ourselves and others to receive this gift.

## The Tale of Two Titles

THE TITLE of Gibson Winter's book, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (Doubleday, \$3.50), provides a theme that should shock us into an awareness of a disturbing trend.

Winter says flatly that Protestant churches in America have developed a "suburban mind," orienting their plans and programs to meet only the needs of a middle-class culture. In contrast, a group of inner-city Methodist ministers in Chicago publish a modest little paper they call, *Behold*, in which they attempt to create interest in the problems facing the inner-city. The paper's title comes from that pas-

sage in Isaiah 40 where the prophet says:

*Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God."*

These two titles have a crucial message for the church at this time. They call for an appraisal of our own basic attitude, as individual churchmen and as an institutional church. In the midst of our middle-class orientation, if this is really the way we think, do we want to turn and say to the cities, "Behold your God"?

Thus far, our action has been sporadic, dependent upon the zeal of individuals who love the city and its people. The time has come to throw the weight of our organizational machinery behind this zeal, creating new attitudes and devising new methods to deal with a mission field as demanding and complex as the Congo or China were 50 years ago. We cannot leave this to those church agencies committed to this task—in our Board of Missions, for example. The entire church is involved to the extent that it has slipped into the "suburban orientation" and has failed to say to the cities, "Behold your God."

Our educational materials on creation and fatherhood, for example, must be adapted to the needs of children who never see a blade of grass or who do not know which man in the tenement is their father. The evangelistic method of the friendly, settled suburb or small town will have to be revised to reach the suspicious, lonely city-dweller. Young unmarrieds from the small towns crowd in around towering office buildings, working at routine tasks during the day, seeking escape from the monotony at night. It will take more than Cokes in the basement to provide them with a meaning for life in this existence.

This concern with the city is a quadrennial emphasis, receiving national attention at the National Methodist Convocation on Urban Life, in St. Louis, February 20 to 22. How effectively we translate this emphasis into creative progress depends on how earnestly we wish to say to the cities, "Behold your God."

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# A Letter to Paul

To Paul, Sometime Citizen of Tarsus, presently of Damascus, from The Reverend James, D.D., director of Church Extension, Christian Mission to the Jews.

My dear Brother:

The Committee on Personnel has had time to complete its evaluation of your application as a missionary candidate. Having studied your qualifications carefully, the brethren have asked me to inform you of the mission board's decision.

As a member of the examining committee, I can say that no other application of recent date has aroused more interest. Your reputation is well known, and news of your defection from Judaism has spread throughout the Church.

Your references as to background are excellent. From the thumbnail sketch you enclosed, no one could seriously doubt your present Christian zeal.

The statement regarding your physical condition raised some questions among members of the committee. You did not state the specific nature of the physical disability you referred to as your "thorn in the flesh." Everything else being satisfactory, you probably would not be disqualified for reasons of health alone, unless of course the ailment was of such a serious nature as to hinder your work noticeably (epilepsy, poor eyesight, or a speech impediment). You should be advised that seldom a day passes without a report reaching us of the hardships endured by our extension workers. Have you considered the possibility of persecution at the hands of former friends, beatings or stonings, to say nothing of the daily privations of physical needs?

The account of your dramatic conversion is most interesting. Your claim to apostleship on the basis of privately revealed revelation is not the first to come before the committee, of course. And none of the members can testify to having undergone exactly the kind of experience you relate; on this basis alone, however, we would not discount its validity. One of the brethren suggested that perhaps the report of your examining physician in Damascus might throw additional light on the exact nature of the experience. (I might add that even for a man conditioned to life out-of-doors, the trip from Jerusalem to Damascus in the heat of the noon-day sun is a perilous undertaking. But I digress.)

The most disturbing part of your application was revealed in the statement of your philosophy of the Christian Mission. Frankly, the Committee viewed

with alarm your proposed plan to "carry the Gospel throughout the Gentile world." Our present program of church extension envisions no such mission. For one thing, such a vast program as you suggest would be quite impractical. I am convinced, as is Dr. Simon Peter, that few Gentile converts would be prepared to undergo the rites and ceremonies of Jewish law leading to preparatory membership in the Christian fellowship. Furthermore, we have neither the personnel nor the finances at this time for carrying on such an adventurous undertaking, if it is started. (The truth of the matter is that we are even having some difficulty maintaining the mother church here in Jerusalem!)

You made no mention of your administrative ability or experience. But knowing something of your past endeavors as prosecuting attorney for the Sanhedrin, we are led to surmise that you would be most effective. Yet, our need at this time is for men of more even temperament; one has to be all things to all men, and compromises are sometimes necessary in order not to alienate men of status and wealth we are now most anxious to draw into the fellowship.

There is one other consideration—and I hesitate to mention this—it is getting more difficult every day to place an unmarried man in the field. The first preference of a community is for a husband-wife team.

Frankly, Brother Paul, the weight of evidence is against our giving you a regular missionary appointment at this time. It is, therefore, with deep regret that the board cannot act favorably on your application. This does not mean, however, that we cannot assist you in finding a place of effective service.

Our suggestion is that you resume your old trade of tentmaking. With the housing situation what it is today, tentmakers command premium wages everywhere.

If you should be interested in locating here in Jerusalem, I am sure that something could be worked out for occasional speaking engagements. The board is prepared to certify you as a local preacher with all rights and privileges, should you come. There is a lifetime of work to be done right here in Jerusalem among Jews and Jewish converts. We feel that this would be the most effective field of service for a man of your background and experience.

Please be assured of our continued interest in you. If we can be of further service, let us know. With every good wish for the future, I am,

Yours in His service,  
JAMES

Had this letter been delivered, the history of the Christian Church might have been different. It was sent to us by Frank Arnold Matthews, Jr., minister of the Donnellson Methodist Circuit, Donnellson, Iowa.

# THE NEW

# Pacifism

By PAUL N. ELBIN

**Despite the decline of traditional pacifism, today's pacifists may prevent destruction.**

THE VIRTUAL disappearance of traditional pacifism from the world scene, despite the unspeakable horrors of nuclear warfare, is one of the striking phenomena of our times.

The peace bodies exist, to be sure, and the faithful are true to their doctrine of peace at any price. But the influence of intellectual pacifism is nil compared to the spread of pacifism in the 1930s. One has only to compare the agenda of major denominational gatherings today with those a quarter century ago to realize how silent, how excluded the professional pacifist is today.

Yet Christ is acclaimed by Christians everywhere as the Prince of Peace, and the Gospels confront us with the demand to love our enemies and to practice good will to men.

What is the background for understanding the paradoxical status of pacifism in today's precarious world?

Whether Jesus would classify as a pacifist has been debated. But there is no denying that he refused membership in the Zealots, those patriotic revolutionaries of his time who had forceful notions about how the Kingdom should be restored. He counseled against rebellion seeking to expel the Roman overlords and advised paying the Roman tax. Moreover he preached the hard doctrine of the second mile and the turned cheek. He died on Calvary, not at Armageddon.

Jesus' first followers, members of what is sometimes called the primitive Christian Church, believed pacifism to be the rule of the Christian life. In pre-Constantine years a Christian would serve in the Roman army only if his duties did not include killing. Guard duty in a remote province was considered suitable military service for a Christian, but combat duty was ruled out.

After the Emperor Constantine embraced Christianity, an attitude toward

war was developed that set the pattern for the Roman Church through the Middle Ages, and indeed to the present day.

When war is the instrument of national policy, it should be accepted by all nationals, including those who consider themselves Christians. This retreat from pacifism extended as far as the declaration of Holy Wars, notably the famous and infamous Crusades. Yet within the community of the Roman Church there has always remained a pacifist core, the religious themselves, who have not only abstained from martial conflict, but from martial endeavors except as chaplains and other noncombatants.

In the main, Protestants have followed Catholic policy with respect to war—most Protestants believe it to be their patriotic duty (and sometimes also their religious obligation) to obey whatever orders the nation gives in time of war. In the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) Protestants and Catholics whaled one another with no apparent thought of pacifistic scruples.

Yet the loose nature of Protestantism, as well as Protestant attempts to restore attitudes and practices of the early Christian church, inevitably served to revive belief in pacifism as a Christian essential. Quakers, Mennonites, Brethren, Hutterites come to mind as Christian bodies dedicated to peace whatever the provocation, and it cannot be overlooked that large denominational families, especially the Methodists, have at times experienced the growth of large pacifist minorities.

Pacifism, both in and out of the churches, reached its peak of influence in the 1930s. The 1936 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church said: "War as we now know it is utterly destructive. It is the greatest social sin of modern times; a denial of the ideals of Christ; a violation of human personality; and a threat to civilization. Therefore, we declare that the Methodist Episcopal Church as an institution does not endorse, support, or propose to participate in war. . . . We therefore petition the government of the United States to grant

to members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who may be conscientious objectors to war, the same exemption to military service as has long been granted to members of the Society of Friends and similar religious organizations."

The 1930 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican church said: "We affirm that war as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ." Maintained the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America: "The war-system of the nations is . . . the most ominous anti-Christian phase of modern life."

On Armistice Day 1934, 300 churchmen including 60 bishops announced: "The time has come when organized religion must proclaim that never again shall war be waged under the sanction of the church." Added Bishop Oldham: "No one has yet had the temerity to dress Christ in khaki and arm him with a bayonet or hand grenade. Such would be the ultimate blasphemy, and this is the final and unanswerable argument."

Even the military repeated the emphasis. Said General Bliss: "The responsibility for another war is entirely upon the professing Christians of the United States. If another war should come, they will be responsible for every drop of blood that will be shed. . . ."

In 1934 Major General Smedley D. Butler asserted that the world was on the verge of another war and vowed that he would "never carry a rifle beyond the borders of the United States again. . . . They can put me in jail or do anything they want with me."

Then came the black night of Hitlerism, and pacifism folded. A murderous demon directing the energies of a mighty nation threatened to turn civilization into savagery. Declared England's Dean Inge: "It is useless for the sheep to pass resolutions in favor of vegetarians while the wolf remains of a different opinion." Said Maude Royden, influential English preacher: "I used to be a pacifist. I know now that I would rather go to hell for fighting than to have my son brought up to think it is funny to kick a Jew in the stomach."

Professor John C. Bennett, who teaches applied Christianity at Union Seminary, New York, recently testified to the collapse of pacifism in his own thinking: "Once I was a pragmatic pacifist who believed that of all possible social evils, war was the greatest. Then in the 30s I saw that there was something worse than war: brutal totalitarianism, and especially its extension from one country to another by military force."

Pacifists and non-pacifists are likely to agree on the nature of the struggle between East and West that began at the close of World War II and may well continue for a century. Bertrand Russell sums up the position of the West: "The

*Paul N. Elbin is a Presbyterian, and president of West Liberty State College in West Liberty, W.Va.*

# Worth Quoting

MORE IS REQUIRED of and possible to a theology of historical relativism. Relativism does not imply subjectivism and scepticism. It is not evident that the man who is forced to confess that his view of things is conditioned by the standpoint he occupies must doubt the reality of what he sees. It is not apparent that one who knows that his concepts are not universal must also doubt that they are concepts of the universal, or that one who understands how all his experience is historically mediated must believe that nothing is mediated through history.

—RICHARD H. NIEBUHR, *The Meaning of Revelation*, Macmillan Co.

AT A TIME when man's individuality is being threatened as never before it is well to pause before asking how we can apply the laws of animal-learning to man. . . . The mass-application of conditioning techniques, whether in the interests of advertising or of politics, is as great a threat to man's existence as an individual as is the H-bomb to his existence as a species.

—PATRICK MEREDITH, *Learning Remembering and Knowing*, Association Press.

IT IS TIME to point out that the threat of Communism in the United States really is trivial in comparison with the truly great threat. This is the godless materialism, moral decay, and easy-going self-righteousness which is everywhere. It is the breakdown of family and home life, the loss of integrity and sense of responsibility for the common good, not only in labor unions but among business executives. It is the false patriotism of those who would make God into our own image, who without thought of soul-searching and repentance, claim God for our side, ascribing divinity to our aims and achievements.

As Karl Barth has reminded us, the lion of opposition to Christian values so apparent to our eyes as we view the Communist world, likewise is on the prowl among us in our chauvinism and moral flabbiness. American identification of its will-to-power with the will of God, unfortunately so common among us, is quite as monstrous as the Marxist denial of God. Both issue from the perversion of patriotism into idolatry.

—EVERETT W. PALMER, Bishop, Seattle Area.

State for us is a convenience, not an object of worship. We see man's greatness in the individual life. We do not think that individuals should be alike."

The position of communism, which dominates the East, is stated thus by Lord Russell: "The individual is thought of no importance; he is expendable. What is important is the state. In the Soviet world human dignity counts for nothing."

That such contrasting philosophies, embedded in large geographical portions of the earth, should come into conflict is inevitable. It is one of the tragedies of history that this clash should occur at a time when the means of nuclear war are being fully developed. Says Robert Oppenheimer: "Nuclear weapons . . . now haunt our imaginations with an apocalyptic vision that could well become a terrible reality—the disappearance of man as a species from the surface of the earth."

The picture of two men locked in a small cellar each armed with a hand grenade is offered by Arnold Toynbee as a representation of East and West as they face each other today. "Whoever throws one [grenade] may smear his opponent on the wall a little more completely than he does himself."

"Drive off the cliff, James, I'm committing suicide," is as sensible as modern nuclear war. "There is no longer any alternative to peace," maintained President Eisenhower in an historic utterance, and President Kennedy began his term in office by speaking of the possibility that the planet itself might be destroyed.

The new pacifism, nuclear pacifism, practical pacifism divorced in whole or in part from theoretical, historical pacifism is evidenced further by such statements as this from Admiral Arleigh Burke: "Modern weapons would destroy both sides in any future war, and that's why general war is growing more and more remote."

Whatever their backgrounds, whether inclined to historic pacifism or not, men of the Christian tradition cannot fail to be horrified by the thought of nuclear war and to be uplifted by the fact that war is being resisted not only by forces of understanding and good will but by the so-called practical men of action who realize that action in the form of general war would be universally fatal.

Three attitudes toward war are held by Christians:

One is the attitude of the defensive warrior. He is willing to fight the enemies of his country as a policeman fights the enemies of law and order or as a fireman combats destroying flames. He opposes aggressive and preventive wars. If he fights, he fights in a defensive frame of mind and with the protesting hand of reluctance on everything he feels constrained to do. He is apt to quote Jesus, *I came not to send peace but a sword.*

Lincoln fought the Civil War in this spirit.

When Prince Arjuna of the *Bhagavad Gita* was confronted with attack on his country, as the ruler he was obliged to defend the land. But as a Hindu he was committed to non-violence. The god Krishna resolved his dilemma: "Fight, but without hatred." This is the spirit of the Christian turned warrior.

Another attitude is that of the just-war pacifist. He believes all war to be evil, but he believes that militant nazism or communism is an even greater evil than war. With repentance in his heart, he compromises one ideal for the sake of another. He is apt to speak of Jesus' violence in overturning the tables of the moneychangers.

Pure pacifism is the third point of view. *But I say unto you that ye resist not evil*, is a familiar reference to the teachings of Jesus by pure pacifists. The pacifist believes that the only hope for mankind lies in converting enough individuals to non-violence.

Pure pacifism, as Toynbee wisely says, is for saints, not for nations. But within the Christian fellowship there is room for all three gradations of honest belief regarding war.

In the meantime we may take hope. The peoples of all the world want peace. 20th-century man knows a great deal about war, and he doesn't like it. The "police action" in Korea, for instance, killed or maimed 10 per cent of the entire population.

There is still a chance for statesmanship to save mankind from destruction. The balance of terror between East and West is at least a balance. To be sure, so long as each side is trying to unbalance the balance, there is always imminent danger of war. But every responsible statesman in the world knows that in a nuclear holocaust communism and Western culture are in equal danger of annihilation. This sober realization is honest justification for hope.

We of the West, the Judeo-Christian tradition, may well ponder the famous dictum of Napoleon: "There are only two powers in the world—the sword and the spirit. In the long run the sword is always defeated by the spirit." Since the battle is basically for men's minds and hearts, for their loyalties, the present struggle between East and West will not likely be resolved by force.

In a sense we are all pacifists now on both sides of the Iron Curtain—the admirals and the generals, the diplomats and the legislators, as well as the saints of God who believe that the greatest power ever unloosed is the unrelenting pressure of the Prince of Peace on the hearts of men and women.

If the new pacifism with the aid of the old can delay missile warfare long enough, there may be time for the spirit to win.



## Christmas for the Wesleys was a Time to Sing...

# Songs of the Incarnation

By CYRIL DORSETT

THE BROTHERS Wesley would be amazed today to hear Christmas carols constantly blaring forth on street corners, from television screens, and at practically every public gathering of Americans during the month of December. But they would be disturbed to discover that it is only these very same carols that are repeated at most church services during this season.

Early Methodists were not bound to a few Christmas hymns. They shared a sense of exciting discovery as new hymns were written and sung for the first time. Many of these were composed by Methodism's song writer, Charles Wesley. For Charles and his brother John, Christmas was a joyous season, a time to think of the deeper theological significance of the Incarnation. Their hymns reveal this concern.

Most of these hymns are unfortunately no longer in print. If they were available, a greater use of these frankly theological poems set to music could help us celebrate Christmas with a distinctive Christian note. Then our Christmas services would not sound like poor carbon copies of the Perry Como show or a slice of *Sing Along with Mitch*.

An examination of early Methodist songbooks indicates that when the Wesleys sang at the Christmas season, they concentrated on the Incarnation!

In 1739 the Wesleys published *Hymns and Sacred Poems* which included hymns for Christmas Day, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension Day, and Whitsuntide. All the hymns are in the same measure and are good examples of the simplicity and power of Charles Wesley's poetry, which was later to have such a tremendous influence on the great evangelical awakening in Britain. This collection contains Charles's *Hark! how all the welkin rings*, later changed by George Whitefield to *Hark! the herald angels sing*. Of its excellency and popularity there is certainly no doubt, but there are two verses not in-

cluded in our hymnal which are worth consideration:

*Come desire of nations come,  
Fix in us Thy humble home;  
Rise, the woman's conquering seed  
Bruise in us the serpent's head.  
Now display thy saving power,  
Ruined nature now restore;  
Now in mystic union join  
This to ours and ours to thine.*

*Adam's likeness, Lord efface;  
Stamp thine image in its place.  
Second Adam from above  
Reinstate us in thy love.  
Let us thee, though lost, regain,  
Then the life, the inner man;  
O! to all thyself impart,  
Formed in each believing heart.*

Five years later the Wesley brothers published a small book containing 18 hymns: *Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord*, a very comprehensive collection of poems in the theology of the Incarnation. They evidently felt that the joy of Christmas should be linked with an understanding of what God did when "the word became flesh and dwelt among us." Here is an example:

*Glory be to God on high,  
And peace on earth descend:  
God comes down, he bows the sky,  
And shows himself our friend:  
God the invisible appears:  
God, the blest, the great I AM,  
Sojourns in this vale of tears,  
And Jesus is his name.*

*Him the angels all adored,  
Their maker and their King,  
Tidings of their humbled Lord  
They now to mortals bring.  
Emptied of his majesty,  
Of his dazzling glories shorn,  
Being's source begins to be,  
And God himself is born!*

*See the eternal Son of God  
A mortal Son of man:  
Dwelling in an earthly clod,  
Whom heaven cannot contain.*

*Stand amazed, ye heavens at this:  
See the Lord of earth and skies;  
Humbled to the dust he is,  
And in a manger lies.*

*We, the sons of men, rejoice,  
The Prince of Peace proclaim;  
With heaven's host lift up our voice,  
And shout Immanuel's name:  
Knees and hearts to him we bow;  
Of our flesh and of our bone,  
Jesus is our brother now,  
And God is all our own.*

(These words can be sung to the tune on page 281 in our present Hymnal.)

Another in that collection is also a vigorous theological expression and outlines with dramatic force the birth of Jesus in smoothly flowing poetical phrases:

*Let earth and heaven combine,  
Angels and men agree,  
To praise in songs divine  
The Incarnate deity  
Our God contracted to a span,  
Incomprehensibly made man.*

*He laid his glory by,  
He wrapped him in our clay;  
Unmarked by human eye,  
The latent Godhead lay;  
Infant of days he here became,  
And bore the mild Immanuel's name.*

*Unsearchable the love  
That hath the Savior brought;  
The grace is far above  
Or man or angel's thought:  
Suffice for us that God, we know,  
Our God, is manifest below.*

*Made perfect first in love,  
And sanctified by grace,  
We shall from earth remove,  
And see His glorious face;  
Then shall his love be fully showed  
And man shall then be lost in God.*

(To the tune on page 63, our present Hymnal.)  
*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus,*

Cyril Dorsett is pastor, First Methodist Church, Newberg, Ore. He was born in England, served as missionary in the West Indies for 20 years, is now a member of the Oregon Conference.

number ten in this collection (No. 84 in our *Hymnal*), introduces us to the conception held by the Wesleys concerning the message of Advent. Steeped in the Bible and ready to interpret it in line with the knowledge of their day, they saw that Jesus had been looked for by Old Testament prophets, waited for by many earnest souls in the Jewish faith, and then, in the fullness of time had come "to set His people free." In this hymn Christmas becomes the festival of deliverance, and in its proper spirit it is set forth devoid of sentimentality.

John Wesley regarded number 18 in this collection as the best, and we are told that early in the morning on the day before he died, March 1, 1791, not having slept during the night, he began to sing this hymn and managed the first two verses. It is a hymn that not only thanks God for the Incarnation, but prays that Christ shall reign in peace over all the earth.

*All glory to God in the sky,  
And peace upon earth be restored!  
O Jesus, exalted on high,  
Appear our omnipotent Lord!  
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,  
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race,  
Once more to thy creatures return,  
And reign in thy Kingdom of grace.*

*When thou in our flesh didst appear  
All nature acknowledged thy birth;  
Arose the acceptable year,  
And heaven was opened on earth:  
Receiving its Lord from above,  
The world was united to bless  
The Giver of concord and love,  
The Prince and the author of peace.*

*O wouldst thou again be made known!  
Again in thy spirit descend,  
And set up in each of thine own  
A Kingdom that never shall end.  
Thou only art able to bless,  
And make the glad nations obey,  
And bid the dire enmity cease,  
And bow the whole world to thy sway.*

*Come then to thy servants again,  
Who long thy appearing to know,  
Thy quiet and peaceable reign  
In mercy establish below;  
All sorrow before thee shall fly,  
And anger and hatred be o'er,  
And envy and malice shall die,  
And discord afflict us no more.*

(To the tune on page 349, our present *Hymnal*.)

In another collection, *Hymns on the Four Gospels* (Works XI, p. 114, 117) are two Christmas hymns which are not at all well known, but which certainly

express the theology of the Incarnation.

*Stupendous height of heavenly love,  
Of pitying tenderness divine:  
It brought the Saviour from above,  
It caused the springing day to shine;  
The sun of righteousness to appear,  
And gild our gloomy hemisphere.*

*God did himself in Christ reveal,  
To chase our darkness by his light,  
Our sin and ignorance dispel,  
Direct our wandering feet aright;  
And bring our souls, with pardon blest,  
To realms of everlasting rest.*

*Come then, O Lord, thy light impart,  
The faith that bids our terrors cease;  
Into thy love direct our heart,  
Into thy way of perfect peace;  
And cheer the souls of death afraid,  
And guide them through the dreadful shade.*

*Answer thy mercy's whole design,  
My God incarnated for me;  
My spirit make thy radiant shrine,  
My light and full salvation be;  
And through the shades of death unknown  
Conduct me to thy dazzling throne.*

(To the tune on page 124, our present *Hymnal*.)

As can readily be seen, Charles Wesley does not only think in terms of Christ coming to bring "peace on earth, good will to men" but also to complete the Incarnation through the personality, ultimately bringing men to the "dazzling throne." Another hymn in that collection is simpler and yet profound. Written in long measure the Wesleys had no difficulty finding tunes to it.

*To us a child of royal birth  
Heir of the promises, is given;  
The invisible appears on earth,  
The Son of man, the God of heaven.*

*A Saviour born, in love supreme  
He comes our fallen souls to raise;  
He comes his people to redeem  
With all his plenitude of grace.*

*The Christ, by raptured seers foretold,  
Filled with the eternal Spirit's power,  
Prophet, and priest, and King behold,  
And Lord of all the worlds adore.*

*The Lord of hosts, the God most high,  
Who quits his throne on earth to live,*

*With joy we welcome from the sky,  
With faith into our hearts receive.*

(To the tune on page 17, our present *Hymnal*.)

John Mason, steward of the Bookroom in London, published in 1799 *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* which contained two Christmas hymns that meant much to early Methodists. The first tells of the wonder of the Incarnation and the other calls on all the earth to praise God for it. This idea runs through most of the Wesleys' hymns.

*Celebrate Immanuel's name  
The Prince of life and peace;  
God with us, our lips proclaim,  
Our faithful hearts confess:  
God is in our flesh revealed;  
Earth and heaven in Jesus join;  
Mortal with immortal filled,  
And human with divine.*

*Fulness of the Deity  
In Jesus' body dwells,  
Dwells in all his saints and me,  
When God his Son reveals:  
Father, manifest thy Son,  
And, conscious of the incarnate Word,  
In our inmost souls make known  
The presence of the Lord.*

*Let the Spirit of the Head  
Through every member flow;  
By our Lord inhabited,  
We then Immanuel know:  
Then he doth his name express,  
And God in us we truly prove,  
Filled with all the life of grace,  
And all the power of love.*

(Can be sung to tune found on page 524, present *Hymnal*.)

Time and time again in these hymns we come across the idea of the completed Incarnation. The coming of Jesus means nothing unless God comes to dwell in us. Here the Wesleys' theology is completed. God comes in Christ—the Word becomes flesh—and Christ lives in us. Thus we are able continually to sing his praises throughout the whole year as well as at Christmastime.

The Wesleys were great singers and intended others to sing too. They intended their members to sing at all the festivals of the church and wrote special hymns for this purpose. Not the least among their great songs of praise come the hymns of Christmas. The collections of Christmas hymns and carols we have today have been enriched by the work of many writers and composers, but to John and Charles Wesley we owe an incalculable debt for giving us hymns that emphasize the Incarnation at that season when we recall the birth of the Incarnate One.



Handel's

MESSIAH:

## Triumph in Exile

By HORACE G. SMITH

*A one-time opera composer combined biblical narrative and inspired music to compose a chain of harmony that encircled the globe.*

HANDEL'S oratorio, *The Messiah*, sung so regularly at Christmastime, has been likened to a "chain of harmony (that) encircles the globe, binding village chapels to metropolitan cathedrals in solemn exaltation."

This work, which brightens the Christmas season with its irresistible pathos and triumph, was composed more than two hundred years ago. The words were written centuries before that.

This magnificent, even miraculous music, was brought into being by George Frederick Handel. Born in Saxony, Germany, February 23, 1685, Handel studied organ, harpsichord, and composition as a young man. Later he studied in Italy and met with some success in the composition of opera. It was with opera, too, that he first found success when he left Italy for London.

But in London enemies and financial setbacks forced him from the theater, and he turned, instead, to the writing of oratorios. And in this field Handel accomplished his masterpiece—*The Messiah*—the work which won from Composer Franz Josef Haydn the remark: "Handel is the master of us all." This great musical triumph, drawn largely from the writings of the second Isaiah, the Prophet in Exile, was fittingly enough written while Handel was in exile from his original field of opera composition.

Although Handel wrote the oratorio in London, it was first heard in Dublin where Handel had been invited to give a concert. When he returned to London critics among the clergy protested that since *The Messiah* was not yet accepted as

church music it should not be played in Westminster Abbey. It was performed there, however, and received such a hearty response that the critics were silenced.

In the audience that first evening King George II was so overwhelmed at the singing of the triumphant *Hallelujah Chorus*, that he stood up and remained standing. When he rose, of course, all stood with him, and a custom was formed.

(Unlike many of the clergy at that time, John Wesley heard *The Messiah* and noted his appreciation among his writings.)

When Handel prepared to write this oratorio he had a certain set of words in mind. These words seem to have inspired if not determined the music. In the writing of secular music two men will work together to provide the songs for a Broadway musical. Often they succeed in linking the words and melody so intimately together that the songs live on long after the show is forgotten. In such cases the results surpass that which either man could have done alone. Just so, the words and music of *The Messiah* belong together. In *The Messiah* we have what someone has called "words of wisdom wedded to immortal music." It could not be said that the words and music of this great work are without merit without each other. But it is clear that together they are far greater in their portrayal than either could be alone.

Handel himself was not responsible for the choice or the arrangement of the words used in *The Messiah*. A man of his own generation selected the passages from Scripture and joined them together nearly as the composer used them. Han-

del knew his Bible well enough to have made the arrangement as he did for other oratorios, but those used in *The Messiah* had been previously selected. There is still controversy, however, as to the identity of the man who prepared the words.

The unique and lasting contribution of this unknown writer was in the way he related the lines one to another in the form of a Christmas narrative. This arrangement gave to these hitherto unrelated selections a new and deeper significance. It remained only for Handel to give them another kind of immortality.

Strangely enough there are fewer passages in *The Messiah* narrative from the New Testament than from the Old. Of the Gospels, Matthew, Luke, and John are represented, and of Paul's letters, quotations are made from only Romans and Corinthians. The collector of these lines made use of two other New Testament books—Hebrews and The Revelation, gathering from the latter the basic material for the *Hallelujah Chorus*.

From the Old Testament, the creator of the narrative appropriated much that is found only in Psalms. There are short but brilliant gems from the so-called minor prophets: Haggai, Malachi, and Zechariah, and one from Lamentations. The major selections in number and length come from Isaiah. Five of these are from the Isaiah who lived about 740 to 700 B.C. They are easily identified by the opening phrases:

*Behold, a virgin. . .*

*For unto us a child is born. . .*

*The people that walked. . .*

*Then shall the eyes of the blind. . .*

*For, behold darkness. . .*

Possibly ten other selections come from

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# The Church and the Law

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*This is a column of digests of religious court cases and decisions. Because of space limitations facts and decisions are simplified. Please refer to the case record for details.*

—Eds.

**CASE:** Plaintiff, who had paid an admission charge to play bingo at a game operated by St. Joseph's Church on church premises, was injured when the chair which she had been supplied by the church collapsed. She was awarded damages by the lower court, from which ruling an appeal was taken.

**Decision:** The higher court affirmed. It said that, in conducting these games for a substantial profit, the church had removed itself from any protection from tort liability which it might have claimed as a religious and charitable institution.

[BLANKENSHIP V. ALTER, OHIO, 167 NE 2d 922 (1960)].

**CASE:** The defendant, who was an ordained minister of the Jehovah's Witnesses, was convicted of soliciting in a residential area in violation of a city law when he called at a private home and offered some religious literature for sale.

**Decision:** On appeal, the conviction was set aside. The court said that defendant's primary purpose here was to deliver a religious message, and that this transaction could not be held to be of a commercial nature so as to violate the law.

[CITY OF ANCHORAGE V. BERRY, DISTRICT COURT, ALASKA, 145 F. SUPP. 868 (1956)].

**CASE:** Defendants were members of the Fundamentalist Mormon sect which believed in and practiced polygamy. They were convicted of violating the Mann Act when they transported their plural wives across state lines for the purpose of cohabitation.

**Decision:** The Supreme Court held that their arrests and convictions were valid. It said that the motivation of religious beliefs in this case could afford no defense to the direct violation of this law.

[CLEVELAND V. U.S.A., 329 U.S. 14 (1946)].

**CASE:** The defendant, a Christian Scientist and conscientiously opposed to medication, sponsored the admission of three Greek Orthodox children to the U.S. These children were later denied admission to the public schools of

Mountain Lake, N.J., in accordance with a school-board rule requiring vaccination. The defendant, however, brought the children to school daily and left them there until enjoined from so doing by the lower court on petition of the school board. On appeal, the defendant contended that her religious freedom had been violated.

**Decision:** The judgment was affirmed. The court held that the defendant had no standing in court to raise the constitutional question since the vaccination requirement did not apply to her, and she had no responsibility for the children's religious upbringing other than in the religion in which they had been reared.

[BOARD OF EDUCATION V. MAAS, N.J., 152 A 2d 394 (1959)].

**CASE:** Upon the separation of its parents, a child was given by its mother to a pastor and his wife. Some time later, the father instituted habeas corpus proceedings to regain custody. The lower court denied his petition.

**Decision:** The higher court affirmed. It said that the objection made by the father, that the child had been baptized Catholic, whereas the pastor was Protestant, did not compel a change of custody, especially since the facts here indicated that the child's general welfare was being greatly promoted under its present custodial status.

[COMMONWEALTH V. WHITE, PA., 169 A 2d 69 (1961)].

**CASE:** Suit was brought to foreclose a mortgage made in 1925 on certain property of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Broken Arrow, Okla. Plaintiffs contended that the statute of limitations did not apply here, since the pastor of the church had later acknowledged the debt.

**Decision:** The court held for the church. It said that the pastor of this incorporated church, who had no official fiscal powers, was without authority to acknowledge a corporate debt so as to stop the running of the statute of limitations on it.

[LIBERTY CENTRAL TRUST CO. V. METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF BROKEN ARROW, OKLA., 200 P. 2d 424 (1948)].

that portion of Isaiah, Chapters 40 to 55, now almost universally assigned to the Prophet generally referred to as the Second Isaiah, who lived and wrote more than 150 years after his namesake. The sweep and scope of his contribution may be indicated by the passages taken from his 16 chapters, as compared with 5 from the 39 chapters of his predecessor. The ten selections, are as follows:

*Comfort ye. . . .*

*Every valley. . . .*

*And the glory. . . .*

*O Thou that tellest. . . .*

*He shall feed. . . .*

*He was despised. . . .*

*He was cut off out of the land. . . .*

*Surely he hath borne. . . .*

*And with his stripes. . . .*

*All we like sheep. . . .*

This list is sufficient to show how heavily Handel was indebted to this unknown singer of the "exilic period."

Second Isaiah lived in a day when his despondent people confessed that in their exile they could no longer sing the songs of Zion. But in spite of this darkness, he wrote great words of comfort and hope. He gives the keynote of *The Messiah* in his opening lines of courage providing the keystone of its mighty arch of triumph. In the worst of times he sang the best of songs.

The fact that the chief contributor to the words of *The Messiah* belongs among that elect company of seers and servants "known but to God," points to the ultimate source from which this message comes. When he sounded forth in the darkness of that day his opening note of "Comfort ye my people," he did so declaring: "Thus saith your God."

Jeremiah asserted that for 23 years the Word of the Lord had been coming to repeat a certain message to him. These men did not speak "the deceit of their own hearts," or "the vision of their minds," or because they had "dreamed a dream." They spoke for God, and not for themselves. The Prophet of the Exile was in that elect company.

Here we come to the final source from whence came the words of *The Messiah*. Handel, who may not have been as saintly as he has been assumed to be at times, was occasionally lifted out of himself and out of this world. At one point he reports that while recording notes to carry his greatest chorus, "I did think that I did see all heaven before me and the great God Himself." If the prophets heard words, it is quite likely that men with his sensitive ears caught the rapture of a deeper, more exultant harmony. Somewhere the great composer found notes of celestial music and transcribed them for men and women to sing with the message of the narrative.

Here, then, is the answer to our quest: Whence came *The Messiah*? In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God.

# GOD'S WORD

## Through Preaching

*"Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel."*

By AUBREY ALSOBROOK

PREACHING is the event where God's Word comes to man through man. The proclamation of the Word of God as Karl Barth expressed it is "man's language about God in which and through which God, himself, speaks about himself."

It is one of the mysteries of Revelation that God has chosen man's language in which to meet man. No doubt God often speaks his Word not because of the preacher but in spite of him. The Word is always greater than the claimer and the human proclamation.

In all true preaching of the Word there are the human and divine sides of the proclamation. The high calling of God in Christ Jesus demands one's best that the Word may be proclaimed through him. Nels Ferré is right when he says that when preaching is "backed with secret prayer, the Word comes with open power." The preacher and his method of proclamation stand under the judgment of the Word of God.

The preacher is called to be a servant of the Word. He is confronted with the claim to be so mastered by the Word that his words will be the occasions for God's Word to be spoken through him. There is the urgency of preaching that is a part of the burden of proclamation. The preacher stands where Paul stood when he said, *Woe to me, if I preach not the gospel* (1 Cor. 9:16).

Ministers and laymen are often more concerned with liturgy, church organization and program than with issues arising from Bible study. Such misdirected concerns may be an effort to escape confrontation with God's Word as revealed in the Bible. However, the evidence of more expository preaching and the renewal of interest in biblical studies are signs of hope.

In *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Scribners, Vol. II, \$13.50) Karl Barth discusses the three-foldness of the Word of God: (1) the proclaimed Word, (2) the written Word, and (3) the revealed Word. Henrich Vogel and Otto Weber prefer a different order: (1) the happened Word, (2) the witnessed Word, and (3)

the proclaimed Word. However, in either order the preacher stands at a decisive place. As God spoke in the past by the prophets and his Son, so now he speaks his Word through his servants of the Word.

The preacher is under the necessity of studying the written form of the Word that the living and revealed Word may break through his proclamation. The miracle of preaching happens when God's Word is spoken through proclamation.

When a worshiper says, "That sermon was meant especially for me; it spoke to my heart," he is witnessing to the fact that God's Word has spoken to him. The words of the preacher truly became the medium in communicating God's Word. It is one of the mysteries of proclamation that God can speak to a multitude of people through one sermon. Although each worshiper comes with his individual need, varied interest, and background, the Word speaks to each through the Holy Spirit.

The source of the preacher's proclamation is not the world. The Word can never be deduced from the world—regardless of how wonderful or how depraved it is. Man's need to hear the Word of God may be seen from the analysis of world conditions, but the Word is never derived from those conditions. The problem-centered sermon is that much less a sermon. The sermon needs to come from God and not from the circumstances of the world. The presenting of "subjects" and "topics" will never do when God calls for the proclamation of his Word. God's Word is not dependent upon the rise and fall of empires or other human situations, but God speaks his Word to men in their situations.

One will say that preaching must be relevant to the day. I would agree. But from whom does the Word get its relevance? Does the Word's relevance depend upon the preacher to make it relevant? No. As Dietrich Ritschl says, "God's Word is devastatingly relevant when it is truly preached and truly heard." (*A Theology of Proclamation*, John Knox, \$3.50). The self-relevance of the Word does not relieve the preacher of his responsibility of communication. He must speak in the language that is

understood. The language of the pulpit must be linked with ease to the lingo of the pew.

However, preaching should not arise out of society's milieu and questions. The world may be asking the wrong questions—it often does. According to the world's standards such questions are asked: Will you be made more secure financially? What status will this give you? Does this put you in a higher social bracket? Such questions lack ultimacy. It has been said that the worldly man "knows the price of everything and the value of nothing." It is the Word alone that confronts us with the ultimate questions and answers. Adam faced the ultimate question in the garden. *And the Lord God . . . said . . . Where art thou? Where art thou before God?* Now Adam has fallen and is a sinner before God. In every man there is his own Adam.

The jailor's question to Paul, "What must I do to be saved?" is filled with ultimacy because it concerns man's alienation from God and his reconciliation to God. Faith in Christ alone is the ultimate answer to this ultimate question.

When the Word is proclaimed and heard we do not doubt that God is addressing us. His Word probes our consciences, reveals our sin, offers pardon, brings faith, and stirs our wills to obedience to him who is Lord. When we listen to the proclamation of God's Word with the thought in mind that God is addressing us, the relevance of the Word cannot be doubted.

God's Word through preaching is not contained within the church at worship. A nominal Christian is one who attends services at the church in a lukewarm fashion, and whose faith does not penetrate his workaday world. However, to be Christian existentially the Christian's workaday world derives its meaning and purpose from the Word.

God's Word through preaching calls for decision. There is no neutral territory of the Word of God. Jesus said, *He that is not with me is against me* (Matt. 12:30). One may not agree with the preacher's theology or care for his manner of presenting the sermon, but he cannot escape God's Word when it cuts through the preacher's words to his very heart.

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## *'Snowballs,*

## *Sleighbells,*

## *Santa Claus'*

1. I wonder how many of you are aware that Christmas is never mentioned in the Bible. The word is never used, but from the beginning to the end it deals with nothing except Christmas, and the meaning of Christmas.

2. The first chapter of John's Gospel puts into words the good news of God, who looked down into a needy world of men. John says it without the fanfare and without the detail of the other Gospels, and yet he says it basically and fundamentally and effectively.

3. I love Luke's Gospel with its story of the Annunciation and Matthew's Gospel as he tells the harsh experience of the conflict at the inn, a man and a woman, and a baby's low cry. And yet John is saying the same thing, although he does not speak of angels singing or of a virgin giving birth. He says simply, "in the beginning there was God. He felt the need to express himself creatively, and he did." This same One we encounter in history as Jesus of Nazareth was there in the beginning with God.

4. God saw great darkness, and he said, "I must put light in it!" And all the doubts and fears, anger and anxiety of men has not been able in all these generations to put out that light.

5. This is what Christmas is about! That one day God saw the need we have! I can't think about God's relationship with mankind without thinking about God and me, just as you can't think about God and mankind without thinking about God in relation to yourself . . . and that is where Christmas becomes personal! God saw man's need and did something about it by pouring out himself upon us in terms that we could understand.

6. Isn't it amazing that these shepherds had to go to Bethlehem's stable before they could see the Christ Child? God made the angels to sing in their hearts, God lifted them up into a great spiritual experience, but yet they had to come to the manger to encounter Christ. We human beings are bound by this limitation of being human, and we have to have things spelled out in terms we can understand. That is what God sought to do for us through Jesus Christ. And that is the reason for the snowballs and the sleighbells and Santa Claus.

7. For me Christmas will ever be associated with snowballs and sleighbells. As I look back through memory's book it seems that in all my growing-up-days it snowed every Christmas. In my grandmother's front yard my cousins and I threw snowballs at one another. There's where I learned how it felt to be pelted on the back of the neck with a hard snowball, with a rock in the middle of it! Christmas for me will always have snowballs in it . . . and sleighbells. . . .

8. Now, I hadn't really heard any sleighbells or even seen a sleigh, until after I was grown. But sleighbells are always a part of my Christmas, because I remember how, at grandmother's house, when the Christmas day would come to its glorious end we would all come together in that long high-ceilinged living-room. The grown people would be around the piano. Over to one side was the open hearth and its crackling fire. Everyone sang as Aunt Tina played the familiar hymns.

9. I'll never forget the glow, this feeling of belonging. Do you know that feeling of warmth that comes in such high moments of humanness with a holy quality all its own? God stands as the giver of that moment.

10. The first Christmas was like that. Look at Matthew's picture! A man and his wife had traveled many weary miles. They were dust-stained and tired. They had come to the place where they faced the most elemental experience of family life. All that they had was the shelter over their heads . . . and each other.

11. So the first Christmas was the family together. Isn't it odd that God didn't just set a disembodied spirit forth walking about on the face of the earth? He could have! But he didn't! God looked down and he saw a man and a woman, and he brought them together and gave them a son. This son was His son. God revealed himself to mankind in a family setting.

12. This is a world of tangibles in which we deal in things that we can touch and taste and smell and feel. This is a world in which physical, material, human beings must have physical, material means of expression. That's why the Church is here. And that is why we have snowballs and sleighbells.

13. Just as snowballs and sleighbells help to spell out Christmas to us, so does Santa Claus.

14. Of course, Santa Claus is not God, or even like God! Let us not mislead our children with any such notions. But, we can show them the significance of this jolly character in the red suit because he stands for something that is important!

15. You know, at our house this Christmas there won't be any Santa Claus unless Mom, Dad and the boys are unselfish! But, if we are unselfish, and if we are willing to sacrifice for the love of one another, Santa Claus will come. Stockings will be filled, and packages will go under the Christmas tree. This will come out of unselfishness and from the relationship of being people together before God. But unless Christ is in our hearts, Santa Claus won't mean a thing.

16. At the heart of the Christian faith there is giving, without expectation of return! "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes on him shall have everlasting life!"

17. The most miserable person in the world is the person who hasn't learned to give without expectation of return. The happiest person in this world, no matter how much or how little of this world's goods he has, is he who has learned to give himself.

18. A man sat in my study a few days ago, and he made this statement to me: "Do you know, there isn't the remotest possibility that I could change and be any other kind of man than I am now."

19. But I know better, because I have seen hopelessness overcome. God is able to change men, if they will let him. I had to tell him so because of Christmas; because the Lord God I meet in Jesus Christ stands for a view of life that is unquenchably optimistic!

20. "And the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." God lit a light in the darkness

This is a condensed version of a sermon preached in a Southern city during Advent. The minister has been in his conference for six years. He used John 1:1-14 as his scriptural basis for this sermon.—Eds.

here . . . and nothing has put it out! And nothing can put it out! What is that but unquenchable optimism? Believing that no matter how dark, no matter how twisted, no matter how ungodly, no matter how unhappy, no matter how imperfect is the lot of mankind, God has it within his power to lift this up beyond what it is and make it into what it ought to be.

21. The heart of Christmas is a spiritual truth. Did you ever see any love . . . or peace . . . or good will? These are not tangible things. They live in the spiritual realm and yet, they are true. You can see the tracks of where they have been with people. You can look into a home and see the marks of love and peace and good will, or you can look into a neighborhood or a church and see their traces or their absence.

22. There is far more to this business of living than we can put our hands on, or see! There is a spiritual quality, there is a depth! And all the baubles and decorations in the world don't touch the heart of it! Because the heart of it is spiritual.

23. Snowballs . . . sleighbells . . . and Santa Claus . . . these things are a vital part of Christmas, and they stand for something. Let these things speak to you a language deeper than any language you have attributed to them before, as you prepare your hearts and mind for the coming of the Lord at this time when we think of God's great gift to his people.

## COMMENTS

By THOMAS H. MARSH, *Professor of Speech and Preaching, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Tex.*

### THIS SERMON

is based on an important idea about Christmas, and the idea is stated clearly: "One day God saw the need we have . . . and did something about it by pouring out himself upon us in terms we could understand" (5). The central thought is strengthened by repetition in various ways. (6, 16).

A warm friendly feeling about Christmas is communicated through the sermon. One feels that Christmas has been and is a meaningful experience in the life of the preacher and that he wishes this experience for his listeners. (9).

This is Bible-centered preaching. While very little Scripture is used, the sermon bears on the central truth from the Bible that man needs Christ and this is what Christmas teaches us. Definite Bible passages are suggested, but not emphasized. (2, 3, 10).



As a structure, there is a definite attempt to show a contrast between the tangible and the spiritual.

However, a few suggestions for strengthening the sermon are in order.

First, the title does not suggest the central idea of the sermon. It suggests a speech with a light touch instead of a sermon. The title almost indicates that Christmas is to be dealt with in a shallow manner, and the sermon does not do this. In other words, the title does not do justice to the sermon. The contention here is not that one should use a trite heading such as "Put Christ in Christmas," but that surely the main theme should be suggested by the title.

Next, examine the opening paragraph. To state that the Bible "deals with nothing else except Christmas and the meaning of Christmas," is an exaggeration. It is necessary that an audience be kept alert by interesting and unusual ways of stating an idea, but these statements need to be held within the range of fact. If this is not done, preaching is validly open to the familiar inquiry about whether or not what is being said is the "truth" or just "preaching."

Even by allowing for a liberal use of imagination and poetic license, one could not say that the Bible deals with only one subject. If this were true, what would the preacher do at Easter and other special days?

Protestant Christianity allows for a great variation of beliefs, therefore, a question instead of an assertion now follows. Is it true that Christ was unquenchably optimistic (19), or does the New Testament give us reason to believe he was wholesomely realistic?

A second question has to do with the appropriateness of material. Should the preacher point to himself and his family as being holy examples to follow (15)? If the preacher is unselfish that is as it should be, but is a sermon the occasion to make sure everyone knows about this unselfishness?

The greatest weakness of this sermon concerns organization of content. By a careful reading one can figure out that the preacher understands what he wants to say, but the sermon structure blurs the concept. Snowballs, sleighbells, and Santa Claus are given an equal if not predominant emphasis in both the amount of material and number of references. Yet, the preacher says these are mere baubles (22). In spite of the fact these are baubles, they make up the title and the main divisions of the sermon.

There is a continued, confusing, and at times, even a forced attempt, to identify the tangible with the spiritual throughout the whole sermon (6, 12, 13).

Even the conclusion pleads for a deeper understanding of snowballs, sleighbells, and Santa Claus (23). It is apparent from the whole of the sermon that this is not the emphasis the preacher intended.

The total sermon says the ideals which Christ represents, giving without expectation of return, unselfish love, good will, are the heart of Christmas, but the organization of material confuses rather than aids in allowing this concept to stand out.

As Paul points out, the human body is a unit. But one does not give an accurate description of the functions of the various parts of the body by attempting to say the hands and the feet have the same purpose.

Would this not be a stronger sermon if a more clear-cut distinction between the tangible and the spiritual were made, rather than attempting to identify the two as one?

## COMMENTS

By JOHN C. IRWIN, *Professor of Preaching and Dean of Faculty, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston.*

### IN MANY ways

the occasional sermon, such as this one for Christmas, presents special difficulty to the preacher. What can he do that is fresh and different with a theme that the hearers have heard developed every year of their lives? How can he say "Love came down at Christmas" in a way that will capture the imagination of people prepared to celebrate just another secular holiday? This sermon attempts to solve the problem by presenting the meaning of Christmas through the three symbols named in the title.

There is much to commend in the sermon. For one thing, the effort to use symbolic communication is praiseworthy. Too much preaching is couched in abstractions that are meaningless to the man in the pew. The great preachers of the Bible did not make this mistake. One thinks of Amos with his plumbline, of Jeremiah's basket of summer fruit, of John the Baptist with his symbolic washing, and of Jesus, compressing the meaning of his life and death into symbols of bread and wine. Even Paul, who often loses us in long sentences of abstruse logic, makes use of the race and the gladiatorial combat, and of the building on sure foundations of houses made of stone, not straw. Therefore, let us be thankful for every preacher who tries to find fresh symbols, metaphors, and analogies by which to make the things of the spirit clear and understandable.

The sermon also makes use of warm, human illustration. The vivid word pictures of Christmas at grandma's and of the carol-sing about the fire must have evoked nostalgic memories in many minds. The level of emotional communi-



# from the desk of the MANAGING EDITOR

## A Preview of TOGETHER's FEBRUARY ISSUE

by James M. Wall



BROTHERHOOD, an inherent part of the Christian message, receives added emphases and additional church attention during the month of February. The second Sunday is Race Relations Day and many local churches will observe the occasion in a manner appropriate to their local situation.

The February issue of TOGETHER is mindful of this emphasis, and devotes several articles to the general theme of brother living with brother in creative and positive ways. The subject receives theological undergirding from **Dr. Charles B. Copher**, professor of Old Testament at Atlanta's Gammon Theological Seminary. He writes the sixth in the *We Believe* series, *Fatherhood of God, Brotherhood of Man*.

Indian prime minister **Jawaharlah Nehru**, a recent visitor to this country, describes *My Crusade Against Caste*, emphasizing the need for the actual practice of democracy in a democracy. He contrasts the United States' ability to solve the problems of its minorities with India's suggesting that the notion of democracy is native to American soil while India struggles against a deeply entrenched caste system.

American churchmen should be grateful that their struggle is against less overwhelming odds, but also disturbed that democracy is still far from a full reality in this country.

Continuing the same theme are two articles portraying the Christian faith at work and experienced far from home. **Mrs. Thomas Ray**, a native of Russia, came to the United States as a war-bride and in this month's *Personal Testimony* she tells how *I Found God in America*. Melvina Ramos, a *Method-*

*ist Girl in Greece*, was born in the Philippine Islands, but now works in a Christian mission project in Variades, Greece, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. This story, presented through color pictures, can be useful in overcoming the stereotype image of "missions" as something American churches do for "foreign lands." Melvina is supported largely by the United Church of Christ in Manila.

Missions are referred to in a tragic atmosphere in a *Special Report on Angola*, the shocking revelation of suffering and death in a land where Methodism has become closely identified with a people's struggle for freedom.

A topic that should heat up a few ministers' meetings is treated this month in the powwow, *Where's the Funeral?* **Dr. Charles L. Allen**, minister of First Methodist Church, Houston, Texas, feels that in most instances, the mortuary chapel is the place to hold the service. **Dr. W. B. Yinger**, minister of Bardsdale Methodist Church, Fillmore, Calif., believes firmly that the church is the proper place to speak, through the funeral service, of God's victory over death.

Recalling the many dedicated church women who lovingly prepare flowers for the sanctuary each week, I particularly appreciated this month's color spread, *Flowers for the Church Year*. Floral arrangements for the different seasons of the church year—not the calendar year!—are pictured as they were used in various churches across the country. Accompanying the pictures are explanations as to the colors, flowers, and arrangements used. This presentation will provide your worship commission with biblically oriented suggestions for the proper use of flowers and plants as symbols of the Christian message.

Looking ahead to the Fourth National Conference on Family Life, scheduled for Chicago next October, **Bishop Hazen G. Werner** writes that *In Marriage Tremendous Trifles Count*. With the article, TOGETHER announces plans for its Family of the Year Award. This is the fourth year the magazine has selected Methodism's most representative family. The family selected will be announced with a color pictorial in TOGETHER's November issue, out in mid-October.

cation in the sermon is high. There can be no doubt that people left the church with a warm glow and a resolve to make the impending celebration at their homes a time of deep family affection.

But is this enough for a Christmas sermon to achieve? Should not the emotional level of the sermon be supported by a strong line of significant intellectual content? Indeed, if it is not so supported, is there much hope that the feeling will last overnight? On the intellectual level it seems to this reader that the sermon fails to make any strong affirmation as to the theological meaning of the day.

In an earlier paragraph I praised the attempt to use symbolic communication. Now I must say that the intellectual and theological failure of the sermon is that the symbols selected are inadequate to convey the intended meaning. First we have the snowballs and sleighbells. The snowballs are not the soft harmless pellets of affectionate play. They are "hard" and even have "rocks" in them (7)! It is difficult to see how this can be made a symbol of God's love. As for the sleighbells, the author never heard one until years later when he was a man (8) and he tells us nothing which connects them with the carol-sing.

Actually, the symbol which the preacher is developing is not the announced one, but that of the family and its intimate experience of love. Would not the sermon have been stronger if this had been recognized and the spotlight turned on the family rather than on these incidental aspects of the preacher's boyhood memories? Indeed, one suspects that snowballs and sleighbells were only introduced to provide an alliterative title, and this illustrates one of the weaknesses of this rhetorical device.

This brings us to the third S, Santa Claus. The preacher warns us not to mislead our children by confusing Santa and God (14), but how can we avoid this when the genial old fellow is brought right into the pulpit and given one third of the time of the sermon? He is made the symbol of unselfish giving, unquenchable optimism, and the reality of the intangibles—love, peace, and good will. There is some basis for the first of these claims, but not much support is offered to make the other two credible.

Thus this Christmas sermon provides at least two principles for our theory of preaching. One, it is desirable to clothe the intellectual concept of the sermon in a symbol that will "speak a deeper language" than we have known before (23). Two, the symbol chosen must be rich and significant enough to carry the intended meaning. Let's put it this way. Suppose, instead of the traditional stars, angels, and manger, the sanctuary were decorated in styrofoam snowballs, sleighbells, and Santas. Would we feel that an adequate interpretation of God's gift in Christ was being made?



# Books

## of interest to pastors

**A Hard Look at Adult Christian Education**, by John R. Fry. Westminster Press, 150 pp., \$3.50.

*Reviewer:* ARTHUR BRANDENBURG is *chaplain of Methodist students at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.*

One of the tragedies of that continuous re-creating activity of the Holy Spirit called, in our time, "renewal," is that many of us have pre-defined the future in terms of past forms and structures and, therefore, are not able to take the hard look at the forms and structures of church life which this book provides and demands. Since this book deserves the widest possible readership, it is to be hoped that we can be grasped by the Word that the future is God's future at least long enough to take this "hard look" with Mr. Fry who, as associate editor of *Presbyterian Life* and a former curriculum editor, performs a courageous task in his book.

In three delightful and iconoclastic opening chapters the author tells us what most of us already know—namely, that adult education in the churches is defunct. There is nothing particularly compelling about this analysis except the style of the prose and the perceptive caricatures of the various types of adult education groups which, in their reality, are almost tragic. No one dares tackle the problem of education in the churches without just such a sense of humor as is woven through these otherwise dismal chapters.

The real core of the book, however, lies in Mr. Fry's theological analysis of the assumptions and resultant failures of the adult education enterprise. For those who know Søren Kierkegaard (or any number of other front-line theologians for that matter) this analysis will come as no surprise. What is fresh and glistening here is the way in which the author has correlated the Christian anthropology (particularly the understanding of the bondage of the will) with certain basic epistemological questions and concerns.

Anyone who teaches professionally or works in a university will see the truth of the claim that no one learns unless somehow he has been enabled to open himself to the future. New ideas and concepts always break in upon us from the future. The difficulty lies precisely in the bondage of my will to the past in such a way that I must compress each new idea

into the mold of my past ideas, concepts, and definitions. Therefore, learning, as a charismatic event in which grace is present to me in the form of new possibilities for thinking and acting, is impossible until my will has been radically altered. To quote Rudolf Bultmann, "... education or training of the will is useless. What is needed is to bring home to the will its utter impotence: so that it can cry: 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'"

Now, for those who by the miracle of having been called to participate in the continual death and resurrection of the will Mr. Fry has some proposals to make about what "adult Christian education" might involve. But let there be no mistake about the basis on which such an endeavor is to be undertaken!

First of all, the minister himself must become a teacher-thinker. Second, the church must become almost a "little university" (one can hear the cries of the anti-intellectuals already) in which the members are willing to look at, to inquire into, anything from Ferlinghetti to Freud, from *Mad* magazine to Marx, from Luther to Luke's Gospel.

Though implied, the purpose and practice of this new scheme is not fully developed. This is just as well, though, since each of us must work through the educational dilemma in our own situation. God forbid that anybody's suggestion would become another denominational program, anyway.

**More Than Survival**, by Morgan K. Edwards. Abingdon Press, 128 pp., \$2.25.

*Reviewer:* W. E. BRASHARES is *District Superintendent of the Lafayette District, Northwest Indiana Conference of The Methodist Church.*

This small book of 128 pages tackles the tremendous problem of saving the world through moral and spiritual revolution. Dr. Edwards believes that "we live in a revolutionary period, and if we are to stem the tide of totalitarian revolution, we must produce a revolution of our own. Our moral and spiritual revolution will have to . . . stir the beat generation, which is yet uncommitted; the secular man who is on the defensive; and the modern churchman whose religious roots no longer plunge deeply."

Victory in this spiritual revolution Dr. Edwards feels could "extend the life of the Western world and delay the visit of history's mortician," and would lead to personal spiritual assurance, new life, and immortality.

Dr. Edwards tries to bend the metaphor of spiritual revolution into the biblical imagery of the agricultural seed, soil, climate, and fruit. This parallelism never quite makes it, as far as this reader is concerned.

However one might feel about the basic structure of the book, it is well worth reading. Dr. Edwards has the ability to sharply describe the modern scene. He describes the beat generation as rebels without a cause. "Their chapel is the coffee shop; their ritual is weird poetry; and their incantations emanate from a jukebox."

How could the power fight between the East and the West be better described than "The contest is waged in a global stadium. The spectator is everyman, and he watches with bated breath, for his own fate hangs in the balance. He is not quite certain for whom he should root. He wants to be on the side of the winner, and he wants the winner to be on his side."

This book is worth the money. Though the author does not have all the answers, who does? He does stimulate the reader to think on these things and then work out his own plan for spiritual revolution and solution.

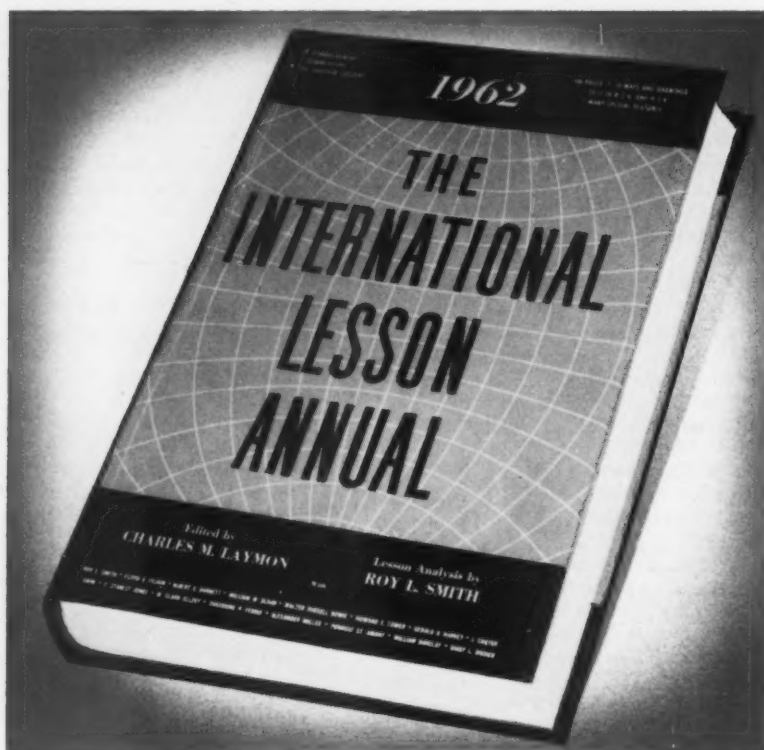
**Jesus the Religious Ultimate**, by Donald T. Rowlingson. Macmillan Co., 138 pp., \$3.50.

*Reviewer:* EDMUND PERRY is *associate professor and chairman of the department of religion at Northwestern University, Chicago, Ill.*

It surely is a rare occasion when a reviewer wants enthusiastically to encourage churchmen to read a book with which he disagrees intensely and wholeheartedly.

That is exactly what I want to do with Professor Rowlingson's book. Had I the station to do it I would call all laymen (including especially bishops, district superintendents, pastors, and local church officers) to read and then study *Jesus the Religious Ultimate*. It is a book intentionally addressed to laymen, both to the laymen in the pews and to the laymen in the pulpits. It is written in a language and in a style which guarantees that no careful reader will mistake the author's meaning.

Professor Rowlingson has written to appraise Jesus both in his Palestinian setting and his contemporary relevance. Both Rowlingson and Jesus come alive in this book, uncomfortably and therapeutically so. Here both are in league for a decision from the reader, for a life-changing, ultimate decision which will

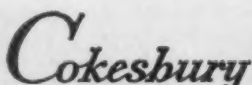



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condition without dictating every other decision.

Just when the reviewer thought he had Rowlingson's estimate of Jesus definitely labeled (now "old line liberal" then "chastened liberal" or assuredly "orthodox") he would regain consciousness from another shattering blow, uncertain of Rowlingson's label, but wearing the marks of the power of Rowlingson's Jesus. That progress in the reading of this book leads the reader to less and less concern with a label for Rowlingson and to more and more concern with the Figure who emerges from the pages should please the author.

At first sight the chapter titles do not seem either original or promising of exciting reading: *The Lessons of the Past and Their Bearing upon Presuppositions*, *The Nature of Jesus' Accomplishment*, *God the Creator, God the Sovereign*, *God the Redeemer*, and *The Challenge of Jesus to Our Day*. But now there is new wine to be found in these old wine-skins.

And there is sound scholarship here, both biblical and social science. Both Jesus and the daily concerns of we 20th-century folk are taken with equal seriousness. Few of us in professional ranks of the church can demonstrate scholarly competence both in our theological discipline and in applied social science. Still fewer can combine this two-edged competence with a lively faith concern to serve the needs and interests of those unskilled in either or both disciplines. Rowlingson does.

**Minister and Doctor Meet**, by Granger E. Westberg. Harper & Bros., 179 pp., \$3.50.

**Reviewer:** WAYNE E. OATES is professor of psychology of religion at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Personal witness, a conversational style, technical competence placed in clear language, and a clear-eyed conception of the interrelatedness of life and the medical profession with the ministry, combine to make Granger Westberg's new book a highly readable and informative volume for pastors.

The book has four major divisions. The first deals with "The Patient: the Focus of the Doctor and Minister." The emphasis is upon an autobiographical word by the author, the importance of professional conversation between doctor and minister as peers, and that this is best brought about by a focus of concern upon the patient as a total person. The second section moves into the day-to-day care of the patient by chaplains and ministers. It underscores the importance of the religion and medicine conference for developing mutual understanding of the patient and between doctors and ministers. Such problems of terminal illness

and grief are discussed in detail throughout the conference.

The third division does away with the assumption that the only doctor a minister is concerned with is the psychiatrist, and at the same time underscores specific principles for bridging the gap between religion and psychiatry as has been done by trained ministers in this generation. The fourth division identifies three areas of joint concern for the minister and doctor: strengthening family life, faith healing, and action research in interprofessional co-operation. This last area is demonstrated through a report of a field project which Dr. Westberg has conducted for some time at Kokomo, near the University of Chicago. This project is highly productive of suggestions for ministers and doctors who want to work intensively in community co-operation in the care of sick persons as well as the grieved or otherwise afflicted.

The simplicity of this book makes it an effective guide for those numerous groups who are just beginning to develop disciplined approaches to doctor-minister co-operation. At the same time, the book provides fresh sources of enthusiasm and inspiration for more weather-beaten veterans who too often "become weary in well doing" and need the buoyancy which abounds in this author's account of his personal witness and pastoral competence.

**On the Road to Christian Unity**, by Samuel McCrea Cavert. Harper & Bros., 189 pp., \$3.75.

**Reviewer:** WILLIAM ARCHER WRIGHT, JR., is pastor of Grace Methodist Church, Newport News, Va.

Samuel McCrea Cavert has been identified with the ecumenical movement for over 30 years. Beginning with the old Federal Council of Churches he moved naturally into the mainstream of the world church. For three years he was executive secretary of the World Council of Churches, whose name he was the first to suggest. Certainly there is no American who is better equipped to survey the road to Christian unity, and although this is not a personal chronicle the author's own involvement in the story adds both interest and validity to its telling.

Beginning with the momentous Edinburgh Conference of 1910 he swiftly traces the three converging roads of Missions, Life and Work and Faith and Order through the familiar landmarks of Stockholm, Lausanne, and Oxford to Amsterdam and New Delhi, where the last of the three is finally joining the other two. He discusses our fellow pilgrims, the younger churches and the Eastern Orthodox. He treats with sympathy those on other roads, the Roman Catholics and the non-co-operating Protestants. Then, in the last two chapters, he discusses the road ahead.

Those who wish a more profound exposition of the theology of *oikumene* may find it elsewhere, for instance in Newbigin or Horton. Dr. Cavert writes with a thorough understanding of theological issues, but his interest is in their relation to the practical problems of unity. His own identity is more ecumenical than denominational, but this very commitment adds objectivity to clarity in a field of literature in which there is too little of either.

For the future Dr. Cavert suggests on the national and local levels a broad organic unity which protects distinctive differences under a single administration. Internationally he would strengthen fed-

eration within the present conciliar pattern.

While admitting that "the danger of too much central authority is greater than that of too little," he may too easily lay aside fears of a new ecclesiastical imperialism. Knowing intimately the mind of his own generation of pioneers, he may underestimate the temptations of super-institutionalism to future ecumenical bureaucrats. But risks are as inevitable as the search for *oikumene* itself. Samuel McCrea Cavert believes that God has willed us one, that our only problem is how to realize his will, and he has made a notable contribution to that problem's practical solution.

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# OPEN Forum

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### Insignificant Architecture

EDITORS: The recent article by Gerald Cross, *Theology in Four Walls* [Oct. 12, p. 7], deals with a vital issue, even though the title of the article betrays the author's plea for creativity in church architecture. His observation that Methodists are guilty of building "architecturally insignificant churches," is only too true. Every church building committee ought to read this article before they do anything else!

The author's point that the baptismal font needs more consideration in our buildings was well made. His suggestion that the Lord's Table, the baptismal font, and the pulpit ought to be "physical expressions" of our belief that the grace of God is conveyed through Communion, Baptism, and the preached Word are deserving of careful consideration. But let us not forget the Bible as a means of grace. Personally, I believe that we need to add a fourth item to Mr. Cross's list, particularly if the Bible is to have a special place created for it.

The plea by Mr. Cross for no separation between the worshipers and the worship leader, as in the long nave and divided chancel, causes me to wonder what he means by the "priesthood of all believers." Does the "priesthood of all believers" mean that there is no distinction between clergy and laity in the mind of God? If this is so, then we ministers should let laymen in on our little secret by throwing away our robes, the title of "reverend," and our divided chancels! But if ordination means that we are set apart for a special ministry among the community of believers, then the long nave and divided chancel may be theologically and architecturally correct.

Mr. Cross has done us a service with this article. While some of his ideas need clarification and further elaboration, he has at least made a stimulating contribution to a much-neglected subject.

JOHN E. CORSON

*El Camino Methodist Church  
Gerber, Calif.*

EDITORS: I appreciate *Theology in Four Walls*. The author's searching questions deserve consideration when we plan church buildings.

However, he overstates his case when he says, "A Baroque or Colonial church built in the 20th century does not speak

... to our age." Architecture can speak from past to present. It offers a stability and meaning not found in much of the current uncertain groping. There is much to be said for preserving the meaningful and symbolic from the past, rather than discarding all for the sake of being up with the times artistically.

Further, one more serious question must be asked. Are we acting as stewards should, when in a world of current need we will spend tremendous sums of money for the primary sake of beauty and art? A little experience in building will soon show that to be the case when you face cost and sound construction. Building Colonial or "safe-modern" buildings is not cheap by any stretch of the imagination, and to create "new and exciting works of art" as Mr. Cross suggests does not coincide with economy or the fact that our denomination cannot afford to put everything into a handful of artistic gems.

The article was most stimulating, but I am concerned that Mr. Cross not be misled into thinking that because some continue to build on the basis of the past, it is necessarily due to closed minds or a base ignoring of facts.

JERALD W. BAKER

*Mequon Community Methodist  
Church  
Mequon, Wis.*

### Unhappy Beginning

EDITORS: I note with much satisfaction your *Invitation to Explore* [*News and Trends*, Oct. 12, p. 22].

Apart from the time and place of Dr. Blake's sermon, obviously planned to identify it closely with the N.C.C., it seemed to me most unfortunate for him (or any individual) to project a fully outlined plan of union as a necessary basis of negotiation. And the idea of the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians first getting together, then inviting the Methodists, was an unhappy beginning.

But his utterance did stir discussion in official quarters, and led to more carefully considered action by the two churches. The fact that they neither endorsed Dr. Blake's plan nor even suggested it as a basis for discussion seems to set the situation straight. It seems to me really important that that situation should be made clear to our people.

Thank you for doing that very thing so admirably.

HERBERT WELCH

*Retired Bishop  
The Methodist Church  
New York, N.Y.*

### Embarrassed

EDITORS: What kind of stewardship of time, talents, and money is demonstrated by a bishop who would appoint a Methodist minister to occupy his efforts, or any part of them, with a congregation of one? [*News and Trends*, *A One-Member Church*, Sept. 28, p. 23]. And this is a church which needs thousands of ministers!

It appears to me that this is not even a legitimate local church. Paragraph 102 of the *Discipline* states that the local church is a connectional society of persons; how can one individual compose a connectional society? Paragraph 159 requires not fewer than three trustees in each congregation, and Miss Spencer is left without a quorum.

I am embarrassed to learn that Methodism is wasting its human resources, not to mention its finances, by keeping such an establishment in operation as a separate church.

DONALD A. WILLIAMS

*First Methodist Church  
North Andover, Mass.*

### A Far Cry

EDITORS: We all agree that a mobile population creates a problem for every congregation in its relationship to non-resident members [*A Look at the Itinerant's Parsonage . . . Members . . . Study . . . Files*, Oct. 12, p. 11]. It is our duty to be concerned about these members who move away and to do what we can to encourage them to become active in the life of the church where they may reside. Yet I must admit that I was distressed to read the item *A Letter to Non-Resident Members*.

The strong emphasis on financial obligation which measures a person's responsibility right down to the day (or perhaps to the hour) is a far cry from what we have been led to believe about the spiritual nature of our stewardship. It almost seems to me that such an arbitrary and legalistic approach would drive people out of the church unless they were totally committed.

DONALD C. HORTON

*Simpson Memorial Methodist Church  
Saegertown, Pa.*

### Mrs. Preacher's Problem

EDITORS: At last! another article *For Mrs. Preacher* [Oct. 12, p. 20]. Why can't we have these articles more often?

We are another of those many families that did not answer the call to the ministry until later in life. I am not complaining, because I realize this has

its advantages. Our family consists of two boys, 5 and 11, and one girl, 9. I sincerely believe we are as "dedicated to the task" as any family can be. Yet, I find myself feeling more and more inferior. I have only a business college education, but have typed papers for my husband all through college and one year of seminary and have learned quite a bit. Now, he is entering his second year of seminary work and I find that I know less and less about the subjects he is studying.

The seminary he is attending has a wives' organization, but because of the location of our charge, I am unable to attend. There is a great deal of responsibility on the shoulders of the Mrs. Preachers that are left at home during the weekdays to mind the children as well as the church. I am certain I am not alone in this predicament.

More articles in the CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE and TOGETHER would be a great help. I have been able to buy two books written for the pastor's wife, but I am sure others will agree there isn't much of a chance to buy books for the home after school books have been purchased.

MRS. M. H. PETERS

Methodist Church  
Lane, Kan.

## No Deaf Ear, Here

EDITORS: In reading Professor Hanke's article concerning the validity of the virgin birth and the letters and responses to it [*Is the Virgin Birth Really Valid?* Sept. 28, p. 12], I was grateful to find that you had not turned a deaf ear to either the more conservative or more liberal of our brethren.

No theological perspective is capable of presenting itself as the sole authority of Christian belief and the truth of Jesus Christ. All too often liberal and orthodox theologians, pastors, and laymen have a way of deciding that the particular stream of interpretation in which they stand has made the ultimate and only understanding of Christian truth, and have thereby become unchristian. No theological perspective is a resting place for a seeker, and those who stand in any of the particular streams of interpretation must always be aware that growth of personality, intellect, spiritual sensitivity, and experience is involved and there is need for compassion and humility when presenting one's own view or judging another's.

Another source of limitation in our search is that having once identified ourselves with a particular perspective, we then confine our reading or "open-mindedness" to writers of our own particular brand, somehow feeling that there is a kind of "no hope" attitude to be taken towards those who disagree.

MICHAEL L. KUNDRAT

Brownsville Methodist Church  
Brownsville, Vt.

EDITORS: To borrow from your cap-

tion, *Is the Virgin Birth Really Valid?* it is appalling to know that there are those among us who boast of their liberalism, and under the guise of same accuse those with whom they have differences of being thoughtless and without reason. The supernatural person of our Lord is in question. A lesser Christ holds no hope for today's world.

ROBERT F. BUNDY

Riverside Methodist  
Elizabeth City, N.C.

EDITORS: Amusing, this scrap among those who, in Wesley's word, "strike at the root of Christianity." Let those who, following in the tradition of Socinians and Arians, do so, take a name other than Christian. They are serious scholars, of course. A serious Gnostic scholar of the second century, if pressed, would probably grant that his god was not born of a virgin at all, but that this was simply a poetic doctrine stated to point to a fundamental truth about his god's unique position among men. Those who make no greater claim for Jesus of Nazareth may have the wrong man and the wrong religion today.

Let the contemporary Gnostic pray and search until he comes to know the one exception to all the false claims on the fulfillment of prophecy, the Incarnation of God Almighty in Our Blessed Lord.

R. E. LINDSAY

Methodist Church  
Pine River, Minn.

## What's in a Name?

EDITORS: I noticed in your August 17 issue [*Open Forum*, "Obvious Omission, p. 6] some comment about names of Methodist preachers.

One of my members reminded me that in preaching a memorial sermon at the annual homecoming I was following a retired bishop, our own Bishop Claire Purcell, and that I had better be good for it was unusual for a circuit preacher to follow a bishop.

To which I remarked that I had to be good anyway because I followed a Pope and had a Bishop as a member of my church. The pastor is the Rev. Ivester Pope and Miss Claire Bishop is a member.

JAMES MAPLES

Rockford Methodist Circuit  
Rockford, Ala.

## What to Expect

Editors: Thank you for publishing John Swomley's cogent review of Paul Ramsey's tragic book [*Books of Interest to Pastors*, Oct. 26, p. 18]. Ramsey's defense of Christian participation in nuclear war is undoubtedly the nadir of myopic neo-Calvinism. May we soon expect a defense of gangsterism, rape, and suicide from such thinking?

WARREN E. STEINKRAUS

Barbourville, Ky.

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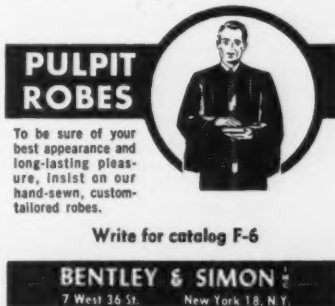
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## ADVOCATE

# Special Report

### Geneva—Istanbul—Rome

**E**ARLY in 1959, on the anniversary of the conversion of Paul, newly elected Pope John XXIII announced a full dress Roman Catholic Ecumenical Council in Rome. When it starts next December it will have taken three years to prepare for the influx of cardinals, resident bishops, abbots *nullius*, and others, including advisers and observers. The council is understood to be an internal matter, and will grapple with world affairs indirectly, if at all.

There was much conjecture on it as a Christian unity gathering, with non-Roman Catholics as observers, perhaps with some part in the deliberations. There has been no suggestion from the Vatican, however, that doctrine would be changed to achieve such unity. (Differences lie mainly in the nature of the church itself, which embraces such issues as the doctrine of papal infallibility, the place of tradition in the rule of faith, veneration of the virgin, and concepts of marriage morality.)

The most hopeful recent note is that Pope John sees the renewal and purification of the Roman Catholic Church as an absolute necessity to Christian unity.

At first, seemingly ignoring either unity or union with Protestants, the Vatican sought more friendly relations with Eastern Orthodoxy, with actual union in mind. That church might accept Catholic dogma, it was felt, as it has recognized ministries and sacraments.

But the word from the Orthodox world was that in order for its bishops to take part, the council must be led by the Pope as *primus inter pares*, on the basis of the undivided church before Rome left it, and when it was led by five patriarchs in Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Athenagoras, "first among equals" of the 15 Orthodox patriarchs, has insisted that the minimum for the Rome council be collective representation through the World Council of Churches. He always has opposed anything that would diminish WCC prestige.

In the eyes of the Eastern church, the real unity of the universal church can never be broken, as expressed in *Eph. 1:22-23—the body of Christ, the fullness of Him*. It might be admitted that unity has been disrupted, but never that it has been lost and in need of search and discovery.

In the words of Archbishop Iakovos of the Orthodox Church of North and South America, "We . . . have opened the doors of our churches to all other Christians . . . also our eyes, our hearts, and our minds." And on another occasion: "Unity can be promoted by us: union is in God's hands." Iakovos visited the Pope in 1959, the first such visit of a Greek Orthodox bishop or archbishop in 350 years.

Last August at the Pan-Orthodox Council at Rhodes (see p. 21, October 26) Athenagoras said he had agreed to visit the Pope, but only if the call was to be returned. He said there had been no response to his offer, nor to his concept

of unity. If in all the world's churches, reciprocity, sincerity, and love should prevail, he stated, union would be easily possible and an ecumenical council could have the heads of the churches sharing equality of honors.

The Orthodox family of churches has had its own "unity" moves, such as the Rhodes council (preparatory to a great Inter-Orthodox council) and the Russian Church's entry into the World Council of Churches. Athenagoras says he sees no clash with the Russian Church, as it needs the support of his Ecumenical Patriarchate. Augustin Cardinal Bea, director of the Roman Catholic Secretariat for Christian Unity created for the Rome council, as well as a highly placed Jesuit, have both said they saw no reason to doubt the genuinely religious motive in the Russians' application to enter the WCC.

Meanwhile, possibility of Protestant-Roman Catholic conversations has taken a more lively turn. The Pope purged many ancient liturgical phrases, such as "heretics," which became "separated brethren." There was suggestion of a permanent unity secretariat. A great deal of information on the WCC Third Assembly at New Delhi was taken to Rome by Bombay's Archbishop Gracias, member of the Rome council's central committee. Reports of lessening religious persecution came from lands where Catholicism is dominant, with speculation that its cause was the calling of the two great councils.

The Protestant four-way union proposal (Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, Church of Christ) drew reaction and inquiry from Catholic theologians, especially Jesuits.

At different levels within Catholicism, suggestions were made that non-Catholics not be spoken of as though they are completely wrong. Laymen were encouraged to be less aloof, and more priests began to take part in local unity gatherings.

In releases on the Rome council, the Vatican no longer uses the term "ecumenical," and "union" has changed to "unity." Cardinal Bea cites a "practical difficulty" of having no Protestant counterpart to his secretariat, with which it could negotiate. He has said also that co-operation with WCC is possible in such areas as world peace and social and charity work.

Father Bernard Leeming, English Jesuit and professor, said "rapprochement" would be easier after Protestants come together. He speaks, however, of the separated brethren accepting papal supremacy and infallibility.

Despite the warmer ecumenical climate, the thread of Roman Catholic thought remains that the Church is "depository and custodian" of Christian revelation—that in the words of Father Charles Boyer, president of the Christian unity movement *Unitas*, those wishing a real approach must adopt Catholic doctrine. "The Catholic Church does not need any change regarding its doctrine."



# NEWS and trends

## Four Missionaries Released

Four Methodist missionaries, held for three months by the Portuguese government for allegedly plotting with "terrorists" in Angola, have been freed. Three have returned to New York. (See p. 21, November 23.)

Amid a full two days of interviews by the newspapers, wire services, and television, they brought the *CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE* up to date on the circumstances of their imprisonment.

On the NBC *Today* show and by phone to the *ADVOCATE*, Edwin LeMaster of Lexington, Ky., speculated that the four may have been held so long because the UN sub-committee investigating Angolan conditions was in process of preparing its report. Eight Methodist missionaries are left in Angola, he said.

Of the four imprisoned in Angola and later taken to Lisbon, Portugal says it has documents with charges, denied by the missionaries, supposedly proving their links with the rebel movement.

However, LeMaster believes that these "documents" were obtained by torturing the natives to sign them or that some may be forgeries. He said missionaries had been told previously by Portuguese whites that the blacks were not mistreated for justice but "to keep them in line." In some cases, they were beaten or killed just out of ignorance or on a whim. As an example, a young lad wearing a MYF pin was taken with his brother, on the suspicion that the pin denoted membership among the rebels. Both were tortured and the brother died, LeMaster said.

He told of hearing, in the jail where they were taken in Angola, natives tortured in the next room, and beaten with the *palmatorio*, a weapon often used in the labor camps.

Portuguese officials explained that the missionaries were arrested for their work in "denationalizing" the natives. The latter asked, on seeing the use of the *palmatorio*, "Is that the way you nationalize them?"

"That's the only way we can get them to talk," it was explained. The Portuguese closed the door to the other room, but LeMaster said they could clearly hear the severe torture inflicted on a young boy.

The prisons were so filled with natives, the Portuguese whites told the missionaries, that they were just taken out at night, shot, and placed in graves dug

with bulldozers. This was later confirmed by prisoners.

LeMaster said he thought the Portuguese planned the arrest of the four missionaries as "hostages," that the Board of Missions would keep quiet about the matter to gain their release.

He told of one Portuguese official who took out a Methodist Board of Missions world map showing its mission work. The man explained that "These are the areas which The Methodist Church has marked for independence."

## Begin Church-State Study

A study of church-state relations, for reporting to the 1964 General Conference, is to be made by a commission whose members will represent nine Methodist general boards.

It will be directed by Dr. W. Astor Kirk, director of public affairs for the Division of Human Relations and Economic Affairs which is launching the study. There will be one board and one staff member from the divisions of the Board of Missions, the Board of Education, and the Board of Christian Social Concerns; and from the Board of Hospitals and Homes, Commission on Chaplains, TRAFICO, Board of Lay Activities, Board of Evangelism, and from MCOR.

The study will take up the church's involvement with governments at all levels, in the U.S. and abroad, and new government policies and programs which might create new church-state relations.

The 1960 General Conference, authorizing the study, had expressed concern over such relationships, and "twilight zones" among the new problems of a complex society.

Typical questions for the study are: 1. What are the nature and mission of the church? 2. What are the Christian beliefs regarding civil authority? 3. Do churches have a right to commend or criticize governments? 4. What is the doctrine of the First Amendment? 5. How have concepts of separation of church and state changed? 6. What does church support mean to educational and welfare institutions? 7. What implications are in the "separation" concept for the churches' interest in public school curricula?

8. Are there particular church-state relationships that do or do not infringe on the "separation" principle? 9. How can Methodist-affiliated institutions be persuaded to adhere to the avowed positions

of The Methodist Church? 10. To what extent have they received public funds or taken advantage of tax privileges? 11. What efforts has the church or its agencies made to secure enactment and/or enforcement of laws on public policy issues in the U.S.?

## UN Center Approved

The Methodist Co-ordinating Council has approved the proposed \$2.15 million peace center at United Nations Plaza, New York.

The Board of Christian Social Concerns was given the go-ahead on a new 13-story, \$1.7 million building at 775-7 First Avenue. By a 28-0 vote, the council ratified purchase of the land for \$450,000.

The Woman's Division has voted \$500,000 toward the project. (See p. 21, October 26.) It shares the present rented UN office with the Division of Peace and World Order, conducting UN tours and seminars.

It is expected that the new center will be known as the Church Peace Center, with no denominational tag, but with title held by the Board of Christian Social Concerns.

It is anticipated that the building will pay for itself through rental fees. Several denominations have expressed interest in sharing space.

At its recent meeting in Gatlinburg, Tenn., the Methodist Council of Bishops voiced its approval of a special church-wide fund appeal for a proposed \$2.5 million Methodist center in Washington, D.C. (See p. 24, September 28.)

Set for "some time during the 1960-64 quadrennium," its goal will be \$1 million, according to Bishop Paul E. Martin of Houston, Tex., the council's president. The property, 18 acres, is adjacent to Methodist-related American University.

## Announce Meeting on Rules

A March 21 meeting has been set for the General Conference Interim Committee on the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order.

It will plan re-organization of the legislative committees, and prepare a report for all General Conference delegates.

Methodists who have suggestions for the March 21 meeting are asked to send them by March 1, 1962, to the Rev. John R. Wilkins, secretary, Room 1320, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27.



Witness

Service

Unity

## World Council—1961

*On the platform at Assembly opening, in photo above, Methodist Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri, Metropolitan Juhanon Mar Thoma, Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, Archbishop Iakovos, Council presidents; Dr. Robert Bilheimer, WCC associate general secretary; Bishop Otto Dibelius, another president; Dr. Christian Baeta of Ghana, Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary.*

*Leaving the Vigyan Bhavan (assembly hall) for opening worship service of the Third Assembly, l. to r., Pastor Raymond Rajolisolo of Madagascar, Dr. Baeta. Following them are Bishop Dibelius, Archbishop Iakovos, and Bishop Barbieri. In the rear are the Rev. U Ba Hmyin, Metropolitan Mar Thoma, and Bishop Sherrill.*



The World Council of Churches Third Assembly gained worldwide attention for the diversity of beliefs and cultures it represented, dedication of its participants, and for some of its pronouncements on world issues.

And, it had some important "Methodist angles."

Charles C. Parlin, prominent Methodist layman and New York attorney, was elected one of the World Council's six co-presidents. He and another layman, Sir Francis Ibiem, a Presbyterian, and governor general of Eastern Nigeria, were elected, Parlin believes, because of "strong determination of the Assembly for lay representation."

The other four, all clergymen, are: The Most Rev. Arthur M. Ramsey, archbishop of Canterbury and head of the Church of England; Archbishop Iakovos, primate of the Greek Orthodox archdiocese of North and South America; Dr. Martin Niemöller of Germany's Evangelical Church of Hesse and Nassau; Dr. David G. Moses of the United Church of Northern India and Pakistan, an Indian national.

Parlin lives in Englewood, N.J., is

married to a former missionary in China, and is senior member of the largest law firm in the world, that of Shearman, Sterling, and Wright.

He has degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard Law School, and an honorary LL.D. from Bethune-Cookman College in Florida.

He is president and director of the United States and Foreign Securities Corporation, and is a director in six corporations and two banks, including the First National City Bank of New York and the Celanese Corporation of America. He is a former member of Englewood's Urban League, and is a member of the commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress. He is a trustee of Union Theological Seminary, New York, and of Methodist-related schools: American University, Bethune-Cookman, and Drew.

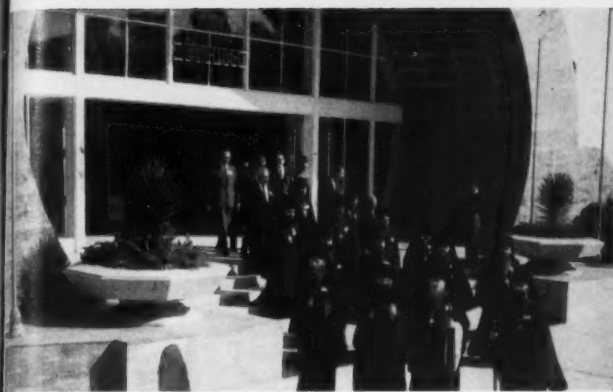
He is a member of the WCC Central Committee and Finance Committee, is Methodist representative to the NCC general board, and vice president of the World Methodist Council.

- Four U.S. Methodists were newly elected to the World Council Central Committee. They are Bishop F. Gerald Ensley of Des Moines, Iowa, Bishop James K. Mathews of Boston, Bishop Roy H. Short of Nashville, and Mrs. J. Fount Tillman, president of the Woman's Society of Christian Service. There are now 12 Methodists on the committee.
- Sir Francis Ibiem, in a speech to the Assembly, charged that racial discrimination, both in and out of Africa, is the largest "millstone" around the necks of the 1958 All-Africa Church Conference.

There would be many more church mergers in Africa if these matters were in the hands of Africans, he stated, calling on Europe's theologians, bishops and archbishops to "stop being obstacles in their progress."

- Five major increases in WCC work, involving \$218,860 per year, were called for in a budget presented by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

It was announced also that about



Russian Orthodox delegation leaving hall. In photo at right, Methodists on way to session are, l. to r., Dr. Robert Nelson, Bangalore,



India; Dr. Albert C. Outler, Dallas, Tex.; Dr. Harold Bosley, Evanston, Ill.; Dr. Ernest W. Saunders, Evanston, Bishop Ensley.

\$420,000 is yet to be raised of the estimated \$2.75 million cost of the proposed new WCC headquarters in Geneva. More than half of the money has come from the U.S., reported Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the U.S., who is in charge of fund-raising for the project.

A substantial gift, believed to be about \$220,000, was donated by the Russian Orthodox Church, right after its admission to the WCC.

- Roman Catholic newspapers throughout the U.S. gave extensive coverage to the Third Assembly, many recommending prayers for its success, and telling of the various Catholic-Protestant contacts recently made in the interest of unity.

An extremely warm and sympathetic letter, signed by members of the Dutch hierarchy, was read in all of Holland's Catholic churches. It called for prayers and masses for success of the Assembly,

as did a message from Switzerland's bishops to their followers.

- One of the five official Roman Catholic observers, Father Edward Duff of St. Louis, Mo., said the group had had "experiences most satisfying on all sides," a friendly atmosphere everywhere. They applauded the Assembly's "very earnest desire and divinely directed effort," citing conversations in nearly every country in a new spirit of fraternal concern. However, he said, "unity has always existed and the Roman Catholic Church represents it."

- A half-hour NBC network special titled *Decision at New Delhi* was shown on U.S. stations. It was produced by the NCC Broadcasting and Film Commission and featured interviews with some of the Assembly's leaders.

The Assembly also was reported on nationwide radio and television programs.

- An Assembly statement urged

churches to resist every form of anti-Semitism and avoid placing particular blame for the crucifixion on the Jews. Such responsibility, it said, belonged to our corporate humanity and not one race or community.

Dr. John Bennett, of Union Theological Seminary, told the meeting that much of the church teaching materials need revising to eliminate the seeds of anti-Semitism.

The Assembly also hailed increasingly closer contacts with Catholicism.

- The Assembly's section on *Service* warned that years of living under the



Dr. Radhakrishnan, India's vice president, at left, is a guest of honor at reception given by Methodist Bishop Shot K. Mondol of Delhi Area. Bishop William C. Martin of Dallas, explains to the Indian leader details on the World Council Assembly.



Three Methodist overseas bishops, l. to r., Bishop Ferdinand Sigg of Geneva Area, Bishop Hobart Amstutz of Singapore Area, and Bishop Friedrich Wunderlich of the Germany Central Conference.

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*In photo above, three of the six new WCC presidents. L. to r., Dr. Niemöller, the Most Rev. Arthur Ramsey, Mr. Parlin. Above, right, Dr. Ivy Chou, principal of Methodist Theological College at Sibul, Sarawak, and new member of the WCC Central Committee; and M. Wakatama, British Methodist and head of a college in Southern Rhodesia. At right, Archbishop Nikodim of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and Dr. Harry Denman, general secretary of the Board of Evangelism.*



threat of nuclear war will reduce mankind's sense of human worth and dignity. The church must continue to warn governments against the arms race. The report denounced new and old forms of tyranny, racial and economic discrimination in the church and society, and lack of communication between nations, which produces false images.

Among other actions of the Assembly were: 1. Voted a conference of pacifists and non-pacifists to study the promotion of peace, with biblical and theological basis. 2. Endorsed a study of ministerial training in the modern age, stressing need for radical revision in theological language. 3. Accepted a proposal that member communions consider opening lay offices and policy making boards to women, rejecting one urging the wider use of women as ministers. 4. Sent a message of "prayers and support" to Acting UN Secretary U Thant on the questions of Berlin and of disarmament.

5. Avoided voting on admission of Red China to the UN but approving a CCIA report stating that the UN task is seriously hampered by absence of representatives of large parts of the world's populations. 6. Urged technical co-operation as means toward political negotiations, disarmament, and control of outer space.

7. Complimented India on its decision not to make atomic weapons, warned big power blocs not to try to draw the non-aligned nations to their side. 8. Barely passed (179-177) a condemnation of Portugal for repressive acts in Angola (see p. 21). It was referred back to the CCIA for revision.

9. Approved the first detailed plan

for Christian unity it has ever enacted. It calls for interlocking communities of churches which recognize each other's members and ministries, and allow joint communion.

10. Expressed solidarity with those in South Africa serving and suffering for elimination of race discrimination. 11. Authorized three highly complex social studies which will embody Christian criticism of both the Western and the Communist conception of the nature of freedom in relation to responsibility.

They will treat moral issues in the change from traditional to dynamic societies; social, political, and moral problems of modern industrial societies; and racial and ethnic tensions.

- The assembly decided that in making plans for the next gathering, much attention will go to the WCC program on religious liberty. Studies will be made of various nations.

An Assembly declaration condemned violations of religious liberty through "legal enactment or the pressure of social custom, and human attempts to coerce or eliminate faith. Voted down was an amendment mentioning pressures on religious liberty by governments or churches which are in the majority in particular places.

The Assembly hailed the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an important instrument for religious freedom.

- A revised basis for WCC membership, approved 383-36 and strongly supported by Eastern Orthodox and Lutherans, changed "fellowship of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior" to add "according to scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Urging its adoption, Archbishop Niko-

dim of the Russian Orthodox delegation said it "corresponds exactly to the common faith in the name of which we are here together."

- One Assembly participant charged that the WCC sometimes sweeps important issues under the carpet for sake of appearance of unity. He is Dr. Walter Leibrecht, director of the Ecumenical Institute at Evanston, Ill.

There was no real full debate, he claimed, and while the discussions were very educational, real decision-making would be more so, allowing the WCC to exert real leadership.

Some differences are political and not religious "whether we like it or not," he said, and the leaders tend to bury such conflicts. "In reality, there is only a very polite co-existence among churches."

A Dec. 6 *Christian Century* editorial warned that unless the WCC gives more authority and maneuverability delegates, future assemblies may become mere rubber stamps for decisions of the Central Committee and WCC staff.

- A special statement to U.S. churches, defending admission of the Russian Church to the WCC, was prepared by the 150-member U.S. delegation. It was signed by Charles Parlin, and drafted to meet expected opposition from conservative Protestant groups.

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#### NBC SPECIAL

An NBC network special *The Coming of Christ*, will be shown December 20, at 8:30 P.M. Eastern Time.

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